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THE NEW YORKER

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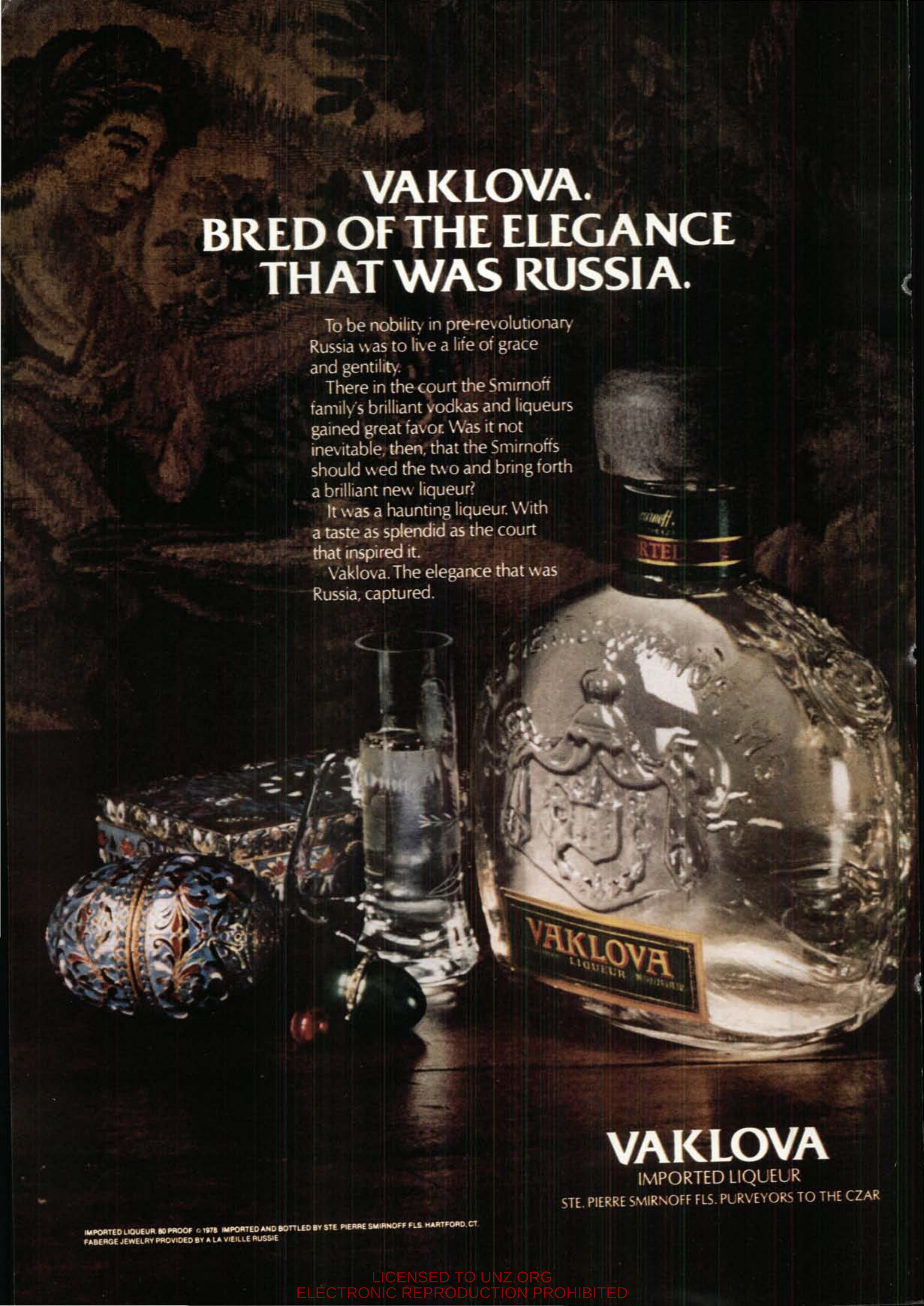

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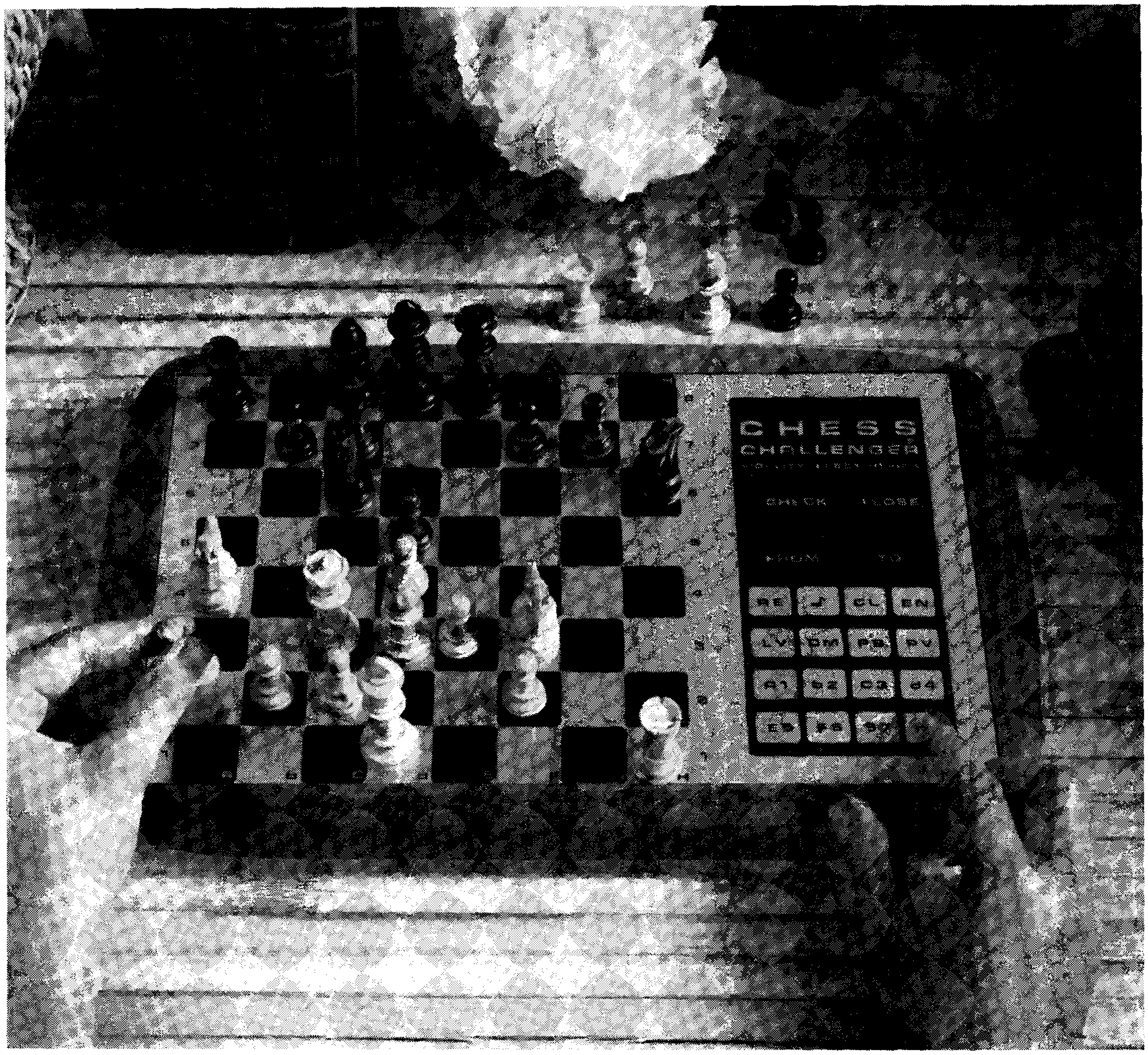

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

(In the absence of our usual morning newspapers, you can get ticket and other last-minute information by calling 869-3010.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Ain't Misbehavin'—A delightful tribute, in revue form, to Fats Waller. We hear many of his songs, and many songs written by others which Waller recorded and helped to make famous. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/22/78.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 246-5639. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

American Dance Machine—The title of the show is the name of a refreshing young company, whose purpose is to reproduce, as accurately as possible, the best dances from the best musicals in Broadway history. Under the direction of Lee Theodore, the accomplishment matches the enterprise. (7/3/78) (Century, 235 W. 46th St. 354-6644. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Are You Now or Have You Ever Been—The interrogation of movie personalities—"the Hollywood Ten"—by the House Un-American Activities Committee, in the nineteen-forties and -fifties, was indeed deplorable, and so is this production based on that interrogation. The impersonations, for one thing, are so inept that people who were not bores are made to seem bores. Rosemary Murphy (through Sunday, Nov. 5) reads Lillian Hellman's well-known letter setting forth her reasons for not testifying. All the words have been taken from the actual transcript and arranged by Eric Bentley. (Promenade, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 799-7690. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas—A cheerful, cheering, and foolish musical about a bordello called the Chicken Ranch. Tommy Tune was the choreographer, Carol Hall wrote the score, and Larry L. King and Peter Masterson wrote the libretto. (5/1/78) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2. Special performance for the Actors' Fund Sunday evening, Oct. 29.)

The Crucifer of Blood—Sherlock Holmes again, in a melodrama that pretends to be by A. Conan Doyle and is really by Paul Giovanni. Paxton Whitehead makes a superb Sherlock, and the scenery by John Wulp is sensationally clever. (10/9/78) (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Da—In Hugh Leonard's entertaining play, a dramatist, back in Ireland for the funeral of his father, is persistently haunted by the stubborn, funny corpse. Brian Murray is the dramatist, and Barnard Hughes his late Da, and both are in top form. (3/27/78) (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Dancin'—Bob Fosse's act of homage to show dancing. The young and attractive cast sings and dances with irresistible exuberance and self-confidence. (4/10/78) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Deathtrap—A witty and scary thriller by Ira Levin. With John Wood, Marian Seldes, Victor Garber, and Richard Woods. Directed by Robert Moore. (3/13/78) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

End of the War—A very good play by Vincent Canby about the officers and sailors aboard a small American naval vessel homeward bound after the Second World War. The performance, under the direction of David Margulies, is always on the right track (although it is still in workshop), and often distinguished. With Dominic Chianese and John Seitz, among other capable actors. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday through Saturday at 7:30. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Oct. 29.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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29	30	31	1	2	3	4

Equity Library Theatre—Shakespeare's **A Midsummer Night's Dream** is the second in this season's series of eight productions. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Nov. 5. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Eubie!—Twenty-odd songs by Eubie Blake (at ninety-five the oldest pianist and composer around) give a firm foundation to this merry, fast-paced revue. (10/2/78) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 541-6490. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Family Business—A wealthy old Jewish manufacturer dies of a heart attack at the end of Act I, and the two remaining acts are given over to his grown sons' squabbles and quarrels over money and other matters. (4/24/78) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

First Monday in October—Henry Fonda, Jane Alexander, and Larry Gates head the large cast of a comedy by Robert E. Lee and Jerome Lawrence. The question asked is, "What happens when the President appoints the first woman Justice to the United States Supreme Court?" The answer is complex and highly amusing. (10/16/78) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Getting Out—A play by Marsha Norman.

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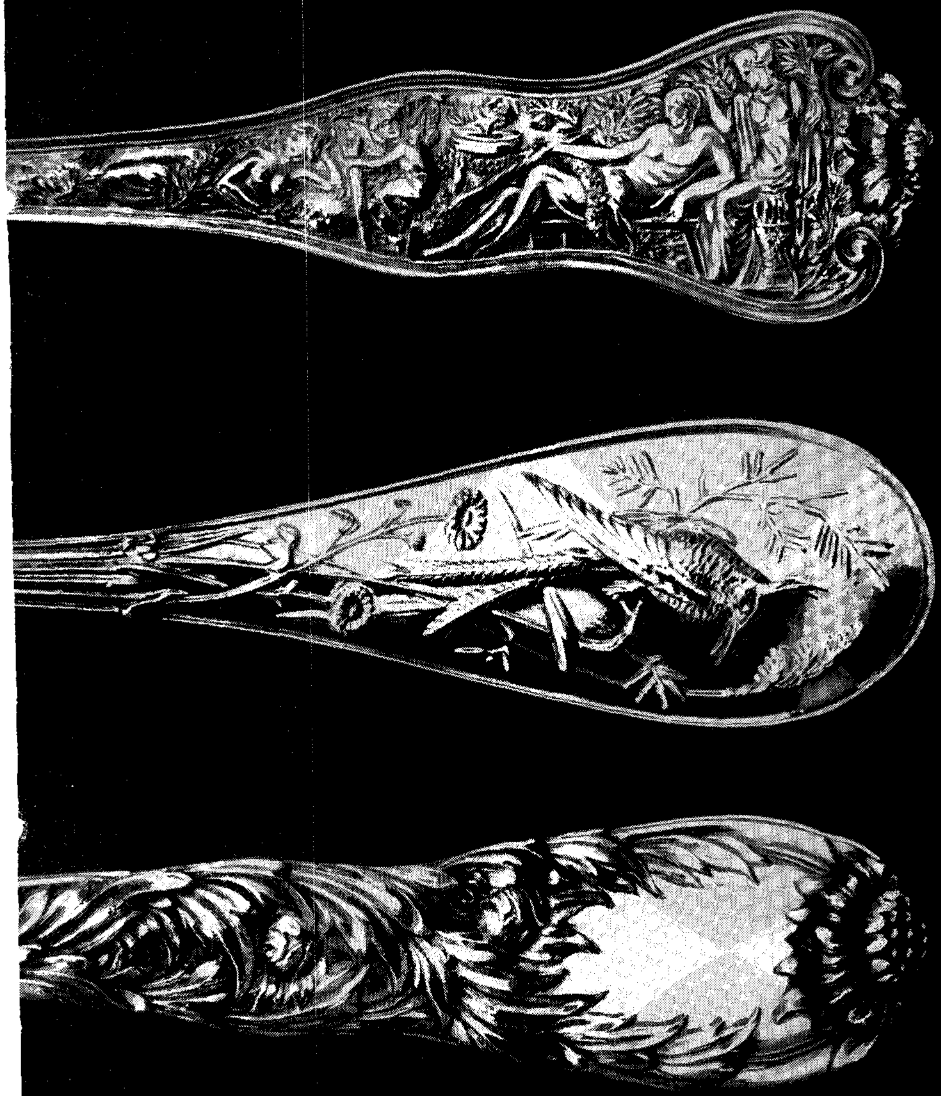
THE NEW YORKER, published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036; Peter F. Fleischmann, chairman; George J. Green, president; William P. Buxton, Milton Greenstein, and Sam R. Spoto, vice-presidents; J. Kennard Bosee, treasurer; Elaine M. Matteo, secretary. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 155 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif. 94104; 523 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90014; 1175 Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta, Ga. 30361; 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116; 21 Grosvenor St., London, W1X OED. Vol. LIV, No. 37, October 30, 1978. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1978 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $24.00; two years, $40.00. In Canada and Mexico, one year, $28.00. Other foreign, $32.00.



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NEW YORK

(Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 730-0794. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 5.)

Glorious Morning—A play by Patrick Meyers. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Thursday, Oct. 26, at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Gorey Stories—A musical entertainment adapted by Stephen Currens from eighteen stories by Edward Gorey. With music by David Aldrich and a cast that includes Julie Kurnitz and Gemze De Lappe. Tony Tanner directed. Previews Wednesday, Oct. 25. Opens officially on Thursday, Oct. 26. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Grinding Machine—A play by Annalita Marsili Alexander. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8, and Thursdays at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 5.)

Hot Dishes—A musical by Maurice Peterson, with Ernestine Jackson. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 766-9334. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Oct. 29.)

I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It On the Road—A night-club singer with strong feminist views celebrates her thirty-ninth birthday by auditioning her new act for her dismayed manager. This musical by Nancy Ford (score) and Gretchen Cryer (book and lyrics)—the remarkable team who wrote "The Last Sweet Days of Isaac" in 1970—is disappointing for a number of reasons, but it has its compensations all the same, among them the tuneful songs and the mockery and self-mockery of some of the words. Word Baker was the capable director. (6/26/78) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Tuesdays through Sundays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Inspector General—Gogol's well-nigh perfect comedy (Nabokov called it the best Russian play ever written) has been given a handsome production. Acted with great zest under the direction of Liviu Ciulei. (10/2/78) (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

King of Hearts—A musical fashioned from the Philippe de Broca movie of 1967. The book and music are weak, but the cast is valiant, and the settings, by Santo Loquasto, are spectacular. Ron Field directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

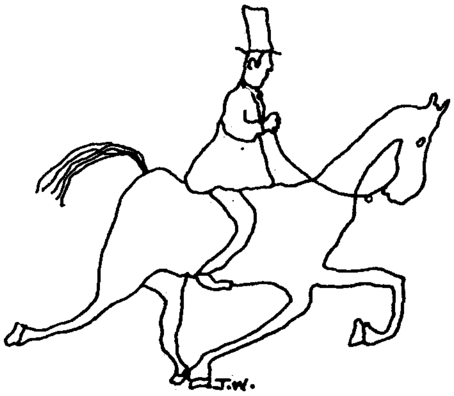
Laugh a Lifetime—An Israeli-Yiddish musical, with Shimon Dzigan and Ben Bonus. (Norman Thomas Theatre, Park Ave. at 33rd St. 686-3535. Saturdays at 8:30 and Sundays at 2 and 5.)

The Lesson—A depressing revival of Ionesco's one-acter, preceded by a deeply depressing documentary movie about the Nazi Party in California. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Harold Clurman Theatre, 412 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 and 10.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Sigmund Romberg's **the student prince** is the first in this season's series of fifteen productions. (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 4.)

On the Twentieth Century—A musical comedy (book and lyrics by Comden and Green, music by Cy Coleman) based on the old Hecht-MacArthur play "Twentieth Century" and showing its age. John Cullum, Imogene Coca, and Judy Kaye are its stars. (3/6/78) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Pins and Needles—A revival of Harold Rome's 1937 musical revue. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)



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P. S. Your Cat Is Dead!—A (rewritten) revival of a play by James Kirkwood. (4/3/78) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Ridiculous Theatrical Company—Three Charles Ludlam productions. **corn:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8. . . . **bluebeard:** Thursdays and Fridays at 8. . . . **camille:** Saturdays and Sundays at 8. (One Sheridan Square. 260-7137.)

Runaways—Elizabeth Swados' musical about the plight of runaway children in this city is, paradoxically, quite exhilarating. The members of the cast, most of them unknown, range in age from eleven to their early twenties. (3/20/78) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 730-1760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

St. Mark's Gospel—As Mark, Alec McCowen gives an incomparable solo performance that never dwindles into recitation. The words are from the King James Version. Tickets are scarce. (9/18/78) (Playhouse, 359 W. 48th St. 541-9820. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 12.)

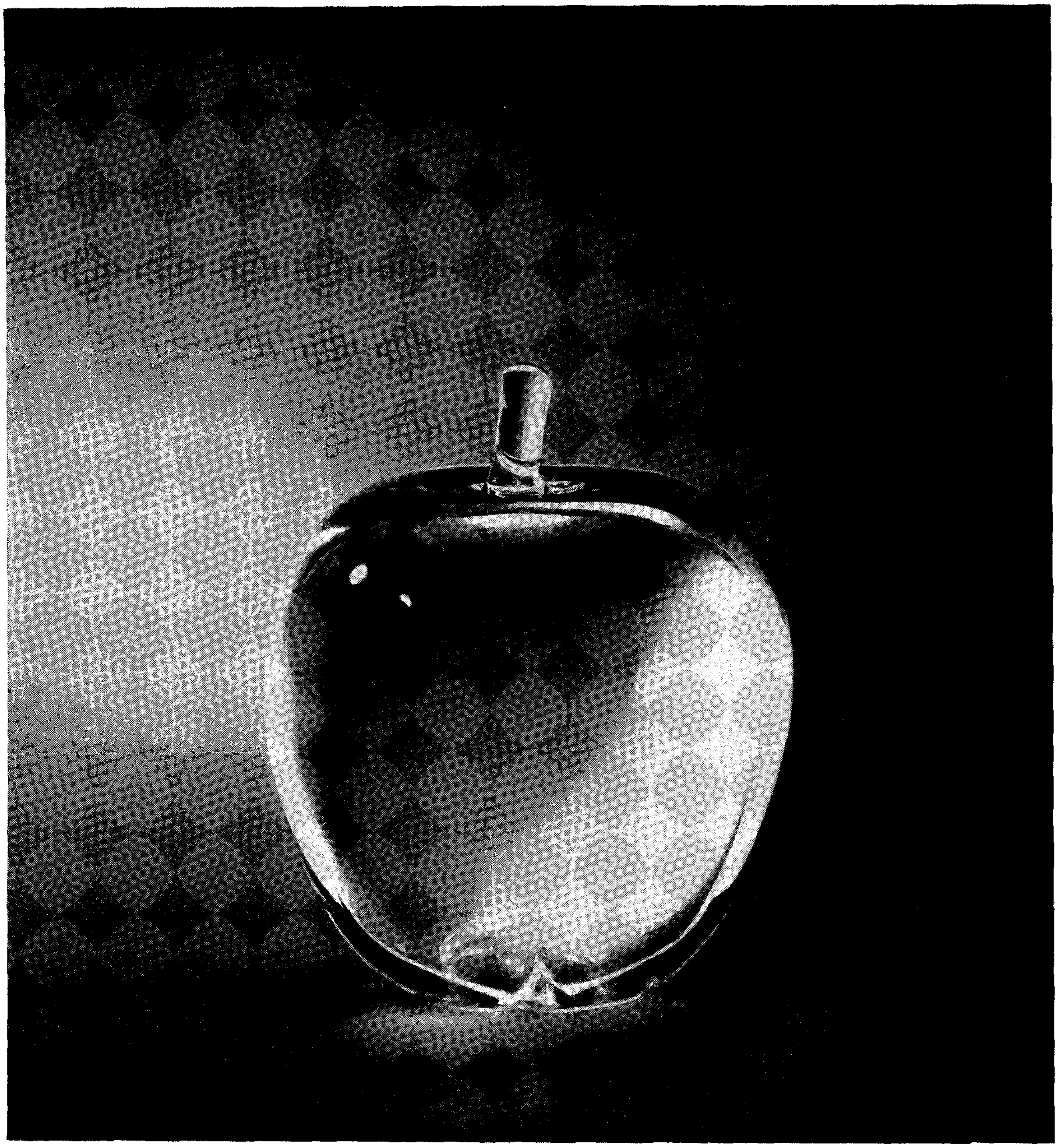
Tribute—Jack Lemmon is superb in this rueful comedy (by Bernard Slade) about a dying man who seeks belatedly to achieve a successful relationship with his son. (6/26/78) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

White Pelicans—This story of the Klondike gold rush, told entirely in the conversation of two failed prospectors waiting for a boat to take them back to the States, may not quite make a play, but as spoken and acted with great power by Morgan Freeman and José Ferrer it makes a haunting evening. Jay Broad was both dramatist and director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**annie:** An old-fashioned musical, based on the once popular comic strip "Little Orphan Annie." The agreeable book is by Thomas Meehan, and the so-so songs are by Charles Strouse and Martin Charnin. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **chapter two:** A writer lacerated by memories of a beloved dead wife and by the presence of a beloved new wife, intensely alive. The author, Neil Simon, makes a lot of jokes in the course of telling this sad story. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-4311. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **dracula:** Raúl Juliá and a splendid company in a charming adaptation of the Bram Stoker novel. With marvellous sets and costumes by Edward Gorey. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the fantasticks:** 7,688 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **gemini:** In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social but is actually sexual. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **the gin game:** Maureen Stapleton and E. G. Marshall in a comedy about the horrors of old age. Harsh, but at the same time extremely funny. The playwright is D. L. Coburn. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 246-6742. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **grease:** A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **i love my wife:** A rather simple-minded little study of attempted wife-swapping in Trenton, New Jersey. Some lively songs by Cy Coleman, and some lively performances, by Tom and Dick Smothers, among others. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 246-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **the king and i:** The Rodgers and Hammerstein success of twenty-seven years ago. Yul Brynner is better than ever as the King—and what songs! (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the magic show:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **mummenschanz:** A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising, and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **oh! calcutta!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **the passion of dracula:** An unpretentious, entertaining adaptation (in the British manner) of Bram Stoker's old thriller. Bob Hall and David Richmond are the adapters. Peter Bennett is the commendable director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **vanities:** In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the wiz:** A black musical version of that well-remembered movie "The Wizard of Oz." The stars of the occasion are Tom H. John, who did the sets, and Geoffrey Holder, who did the costumes and also directed the show. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 247-7260. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Beatlemania—A multimedia and live-music program about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Wednesdays through Fridays at 7, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Beckett Festival—Fifteen television films (English, French, German, American) of ten Beckett works in continuous showing; roundtable discussions (Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8: Stanley Gontarski, Calvin Israel, and other scholars); stage productions at the Performing Garage; exhibition of books, manuscripts, and such; and Godot knows what more. (Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. Weekdays, noon to 10. Free, except for the stage productions.)

DANCE

Joffrey Ballet—Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8: "Suite Saint-Saëns," "As Time Goes By," "Pas de Deux," and "Wedding Bouquet."... ¶ Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8: "Les Patineurs," "Pas de Deux," "La Vivandière Pas de Six," and "The Green Table."... ¶ Friday, Oct. 27, at 8: "Les Patineurs," "Heptagon," "Pas de Deux," and "Wedding Bouquet."... ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8: "Suite Saint-Saëns," "Touch Me," "As Time Goes By," and "The Green Table."... ¶ Sunday, Oct. 29, at 2: "Brouillards," "Touch Me," "La Vivandière Pas de Six," and "Wedding Bouquet."... ¶ Sunday, Oct. 29, at 7:30: "Les Patineurs," "Brouillards," "Pas de Deux," and "Suite Saint-Saëns."... ¶ Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8: "Les Patineurs," "Heptagon," "Pas de Deux," and "N. Y. Export, Op. Jazz."... ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8: "Moves," "Pas de Deux," "A Bridegroom Called Death" (première), and "Rodeo."... ¶ Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8: "Kettentanz," "As Time Goes By," "Pas de Deux," and "N. Y. Export, Op. Jazz."... ¶ Friday, Nov. 3, at 8: "Suite Saint-Saëns," "After Eden," "Pas de Deux," and "The Green Table."... ¶ Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8: "Interplay," "A Bridegroom Called Death," "Pas de Deux," and "N. Y. Export, Op. Jazz." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Through Sunday, Nov. 26.)

San Francisco Ballet—A ten-day engagement—Thursday, Oct. 26, at 7; Friday, Oct. 27, at 8; and Sunday, Nov. 5, at 2: "Beethoven Quartets," "Stravinsky Pas de Deux," "Shinju," "Q. a V. (Quattro a Verdi)," and "Il Distratto."... ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 2 and 8; Sunday, Oct. 29, at 2; Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 2 and 8; and Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8: "Romeo and Juliet."... ¶ Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 7, and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 3-4, at 8: "Songs of Mahler," "Divertissement d'Auber" "Mobile," "Stravinsky Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra," and "Con Amore." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100.)

Dance Umbrella—A four-week season by eight contemporary dance companies which will end Sunday, Nov. 12. **LOUIS FALCO DANCE COMPANY:** Wednesday through Saturday evenings, Oct. 25-28, and Sunday matinée and evening, Oct. 29.... **PEARL LANG DANCE COMPANY:** Tuesday evening, Oct. 31; Thursday through Saturday evenings, Nov. 2-4; and Sunday matinée and evening, Nov. 5.... **MEL WONG DANCE COMPANY:** Wednesday evening, Nov. 1, and Saturday matinée, Nov. 4. (Entermedia, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 475-4191. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Asakawalker Dance Company—A ten-member multinational troupe in a program of contemporary dance that includes "Ecstasis," "Vision," "Opalescence," "Reflections of Romance," and "The Farewell." (Japan House, 333 E. 47th St. 832-1155. Final performances Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 25-26, at 8.)

Whirling Dervishes—A seventeen-member group from Turkey, performing ritual dances to the accompaniment of classical Turkish music. (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Sunday and Monday, Oct. 29-30, at 7:30 and 9:30.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Ali's Alley, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—Your simple, basic, unpretentious ma-and-pa jazz loft. Tenor saxophonist Joe Rigby's quartet performs through Saturday, Oct. 28; on Tuesday, Oct. 31, saxophonist Ken Simon will bring in a quartet. On Mondays, pianist **JAKI BYARD** leads the Apollo Stompers, an eighteen-piece big band that shakes the room with sheer blow power. Music from about ten. Closed Sundays.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Ballroom, 458 West Broadway, between Houston and Prince Sts. (673-9121)—"Tuscaloosa—I'm Still Not Going!," a revue that is a love poem to New York City, is the current presentation; Saturday, Oct. 28, is the last evening. On Tuesday, Oct. 31, singer Yvonne Constant will come in for five nights. Shows at eight-thirty and ten-thirty. Dining.

Beefsteak Charlie's, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-4720)—Passersby can look past the neon sign that hangs in the picture window of this restaurant and see the musicians at work, and the smart passersby will go in. **GEORGE COLEMAN**, a hard-bop tenor saxophonist, works with a quintet from nine-thirty until two Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Except for a few artfully got-up punk-rock groupies (royal-blue-dyed hair, torn T-shirts, and Buddy Holly horn-rimmed glasses are all acceptable trappings), the patrons here resemble the clean-cut Pepsi generation that makes up the studio audiences on "Saturday Night Live." **ELIZABETH SWADOS**, who wrote the musical "Runaways," will perform on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 27-28; on Sunday, Oct. 29, Carl Perkins, a first-generation rockabilly singer and guitarist—he wrote and first recorded "Blue Suede Shoes"—will be on hand; Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 30-31, have been reserved for Brand X, a jazzy English rock quintet; and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 2-4, L.A. pop-jazz saxophonist Tom Scott will head up his ensemble. Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A lot of people like to hang out here, checking everyone at the bar in the overhead mirrors or listening in on the literary gossip. A lot of people also think of Bradley's as piano heaven. **TOMMY FLANAGAN**, one of the archangels of bebop, performs his and other people's standards with a bass player through Saturday, Oct. 28. On Monday, Oct. 30, **JIMMY ROWLES**, a house favorite, will move in with his bassist. Music from ten most nights, from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dining.

Cachaça, 403 E. 62nd St. (688-8501)—If one cannot fly to Rio, this is the next best thing. Jazz sambas and internationally influential compositions by Jobim, Gilberto, Bonfa, Gil, and others performed by a Brazilian trio and a vocalist. In short, a lovely place to dance or, at least, practice one's Portuguese. Live music Tuesdays through Sundays from eleven; before and between sets, there is recorded American and Brazilian disco music and, best of all, music from Carnival. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Café Pierre, in the Pierre Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—**BUCKY PIZZARELLI**, who can play some of the hottest chord solos around on his full-bodied seven-string guitar, heads up a dance trio from eight-thirty to twelve-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**BOBBY SHORT**, who pushes a broom for the "I Love a Clean New York" ad campaign, pushes the piano keys and sings in the Café Carlyle Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight.... ¶ In the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** does some strong piano work weeknights from nine-thirty to one.

Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—**ELLIS LARKINS** is here, playing the great August Förster piano with driving serenity. He does everything in his power to stay out of the listener's way, and he does everything in his power to swing. Weeknights from eight until midnight. Dining.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—This street is still not ready for the Easter parade, but CBGB's, as it is affectionately called by punk-rock admirers, and a few other restaurants and punk-rock outposts have given new life to the area at night. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from nine-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—**ALBERTA HUNTER** is not only a legendary blues singer but also a funny, rocking, and altogether charming entertainer. She's present—with pianist Gerald Cook and bassist Jimmy Lewis—singing "Downhearted Blues," which she wrote in 1922, and "I Want a Two-Fisted, Double-Jointed, Rough-and-Ready Man," which she wrote in 1976. Mondays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and ten-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty, ten-thirty, and twelve-fifteen. On Sundays from eight to one, **ROSE MURPHY** is at the piano, singing her thirty-odd-year-old hits "I Can't Give You Anything But Chichi" and "Button Up Your Chichichi," with support from bassist Morris Edwards. Dining.

Crawdaddy, Vanderbilt Ave. at 45th St. (687-1860)—Trombonist Vic Dickenson is in charge of a trio that plays during dinner Mondays through Fridays. Music from six to eleven. Closed Saturdays and Sundays.

David K's, 1115 Third Ave., at 65th St. (371-9090)—**HUGH SHANNON**, the international café-society singer and pianist, is back on Third Avenue. He performs Wednesdays through Sundays from nine to two.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The audiences are largely characterized by coats and ties and cigars, and they come here (and to Jimmy Ryan's, just thirty paces west) to hear traditional small-band jazz. The house band, which begins weeknights after nine-thirty, is a low-keyed and controlled sextet headed by bassist-proprietor Red Balaban. On Sunday, Oct. 29, **SCOTT HAMILTON**, a young tenor saxophonist who plays the music of the thirties and forties, will lead a quintet from eight-thirty. Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Pianist **HOD O'BRIEN**, guitarist **JOE PUMA**, and bassist **FRANK LUTHER** play standards and O'Brien compositions, and they also support conscientious vocal work by Alicia Sherman. They're here Wednesdays through Sundays from ten to three. O'Brien and Sherman show up early—at seven—on Sunday, Oct. 29. Mondays from ten belong to pianist **AL HAIG**, guitarist **AL GAFA**, and bassist **MORRIS EDWARDS**; and Tuesdays to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** and a trio. Weeknights, Loumell Morgan and Morris Edwards hold sessions from seven to ten.

Hopper's, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—**CAROL SLOANE** is singing with a trio through Saturday, Oct. 28. Mondays through Thursdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, and on Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one. No music Sundays.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**ROY ELDRIDGE** is buoyed by drummer Eddie Locke, pianist Johnny Morris, clarinettist Joe Muranyi, bassist Ted Sturgis, and trombonist Bobby Pratt. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Pianist and composer **BILLY TAYLOR** is ensconced in this bar and restaurant, which, if it weren't for the cutesy Azuma posters of old New York on the walls, would look like an old-fashioned dining room in an old-fashioned hotel. Taylor and bassist **VICTOR GASKIN** labor from ten, through Saturday, Oct. 28. Taylor and Gaskin will be away for a couple of weeks, and while they're gone, **JUNIOR MANCE** will fill in, beginning on Tuesday, Oct. 31.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—To paraphrase Ernest Tubb, the

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Texas troubadour, "There's a little bit of everything in Texas," and a little bit of Texas in New York. **THE LOST GONZO BAND,** which used to be Jerry Jeff Walker's backup band, and which is regarded by many as a raunchy Texas version of The Band, performs its greatest hit, "London Homesick Blues," and other country-rock tunes on Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 25-26. Sunday, Oct. 29, will be claimed by Kinky Friedman, the Texas Jewish cowboy. On Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 30-31, **OTIS RUSH** will sing and play lively, moving guitar solos with his tight, competent Chicago-blues band. Weeknights from nine-fifteen to three, and Sundays from eight-thirty to two.

Les Mareyeurs, 998 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (628-3333)—**RONNY WHYTE,** a debonair, straight-arrow baritone and his own capable accompanist—dig his left hand—is back at the piano in this front-room bar. In a town chock-full of singer-pianists. Whyte is wonderfully good. He does Rodgers and Hart's "Manhattan," Billy Joel's "New York State of Mind," and nearly everything in between. Bassist **LISLE ATKINSON** helps out, too. Through Saturday, Oct. 28, from eight-thirty to one.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**SYLVIA SYMS** (see page 135, this issue) is here Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen to one. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A crowded and animated upper West Side music bar that draws rhythm-and-blues, jazz-rock, disco-funk, and, sometimes, jazz bands. Music from ten to two. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Part of Bleecker Street may be under renovation, but the brick walls here still look the same. Folksinger Jim Dawson is present Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 26-28; Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 1-4, **STÉPHANE GRAPPELLI,** the vibrant seventy-year-old hot-jazz violinist, will perform with his quartet. Shows most nights at nine and eleven-thirty; on Fridays and Saturdays, at nine and midnight.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—**SY OLIVER** and his bouncy septet have the run of this Art Deco playroom on the sixty-fifth floor Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining and dancing.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—One of the very few cabarets where the show can be seen from the bar area for the price of a ginger ale. Barbara Cook is here Tuesdays through Sundays singing numbers from her Broadway musicals and other standards. Shows at nine and eleven-thirty. On Tuesday, Oct. 31, the eleven-thirty show will belong to André De Shields, who will come over right after his performance in "Ain't Misbehavin'." Dining.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—A comfortable new upstairs jazz room—one can hear the music in the ground-floor bar, too. So far, the management has lured in fine players. Out-there vocalist **SHEILA JORDAN** works with a trio through Sunday, Oct. 29; on Wednesday, Nov. 1, saxophonist Denny Morouse will arrive with a quintet. Music from ten. Closed Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Pianist **MIKE ABENE** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** co-pilot a quintet through Saturday, Oct. 28; on Tuesday, Oct. 31, superstar bassist **RON CARTER** will move in with his quartet—pianist **KENNY BARRON,** bassist **BUSTER WILLIAMS,** and drummer **BEN RILEY**—for two weeks. Sundays and Mondays belong to Roberta Baum, an aspiring bebop vocalist and her heavyweight backup band, which also happens to be Ron Carter's heavyweight backup band—Barron, Williams, and Riley. Music from about ten. Dining.

Trax, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—A record-industry hangout and rock-and-roll showcase for up-and-coming rock bands, although sometimes established performers will drop by, too. Shows nightly, except Sundays, at midnight and two, usually. Dining.

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Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the Top of the Gate, alto saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE** will lead his quintet on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 27-28; on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 3-4, Texas rural bluesman **LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS** will sing about hurricanes, wimmin, prison, bad luck, and trouble, and play a few of his favorite chords. Music from nine-thirty. Tuesdays are in the hands of jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** and her trio from nine to midnight.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The **BILL EVANS** trio is present through Sunday, Oct. 29; on Tuesday, Oct. 31, saxophonist **JIMMY** and bassist **PERCY HEATH** will arrive with pianist **STANLEY COWELL** and a quintet. Monday nights are **FRANK FOSTER** big-band nights. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—Mondays through Wednesdays are assigned to pianist Sonelius Smith, who plays "Nature Boy," "Over the Rainbow," Red Garland's version of "Billy Boy," and other selections in a tongue-in-cheek variety of overlapping styles—he can coast like a cocktail pianist or noodle like Keith Jarrett or attack like Cecil Taylor. **HARRIS SIMON** has the Thursday-through-Sunday shift at the keyboard. Music begins at eight.

West End Café, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A hamburger retreat for students and aging swing musicians who can still swing. Trombonist **DICKY WELLS,** saxophonist **EARLE WARREN,** and the rest of the **COUNTSMEN** perform through Sunday, Oct. 29, and on Tuesday, Oct. 31. On Monday, Oct. 30, stride pianist and Ellington admirer **BROOKS KERR** will be in charge. On Wednesday, Nov. 1, George Kelly's Jazz Sultans will move in. Music from nine. Student food at student prices.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Salute to Great American Songwriters—A series of free concerts. Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 25-26, at 6: David Summers and Audrey Lavine performing the songs of Stephen Sondheim. . . . ¶ Monday through Thursday, Oct. 30-Nov. 2, at 6: Brooks Kerr performing the songs of Fats Waller. (Atrium, Citicorp Center, Lexington Ave. at 53rd St.)

Salute to Billy Taylor—Mr. Taylor will be there, along with Frank Foster, Harold Mabern, Victor Gaskin, Frank Wess, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8.)

Jim and Jesse and the Virginia Boys—Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center. Friday, Oct. 27, at 8. For information about tickets, call 427-1488.

Larry Karush and Friends—With Jay and Frank Clayton and others. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Oct. 27, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Frank Zappa—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 27-28, at 8 and 11:30, and Sunday, Oct. 29, and Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

Anthony Braxton Trio (with Ray Anderson and Richard Teitelbaum) and **Muhal Richard Abrams**—Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 27-28, at 9:30 and midnight.

Maxine Sullivan and Friends—With Dill Jones, Paul Quinichette, Ed Polcer, Al Hall, Bobby Pratt, and Jackie Williams, in a benefit concert. (Bert Wheeler Theatre, 250 W. 43rd St. Saturday, Oct. 28, at 4. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Billy Cobham and **Michal Urbaniak**—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8.

Natalie Cole—Metropolitan Opera House. 580-9830. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 8.

Gil Scott-Heron and **Stuff**—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Monday, Oct. 30, at 8.

Leo Kottke—Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8.

Van Morrison and **the Dave Edmunds' Rockpile**—Palladium. Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8 and 11:30.

Donna Summer—Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Thursday through Sunday, Nov. 2-5, at 8.

Joe Cocker and **Jay Boy Adams**—Carnegie Hall. 247-7459. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8.

Chuck Berry and **the Squirrels**—Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8. For tickets, call 977-9020.

Cosmology—Great Hall, Cooper Union. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8. No tickets necessary.

Weather Report—Beacon Theatre. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 3-4, at 8.

Janis Ian—Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8:30.

Paul Motian Trio and **James Newton Quartet**—Public Theatre. Friday, Nov. 3, at 9:30 and midnight.

Anita Sheer—A benefit flamenco concert, with assisting artists. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 741-5687. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 2.)

Peter Gabriel—Palladium. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8.

Mitch Ryder—Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center. 598-3757. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8.

Arthur Blythe Trio and **Abdullah**—Public Theatre. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 9:30 and midnight.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Horst Antes—Paintings and colored etchings by a German artist whose enigmatic figures would be at home among the Mayans and Aztecs. Through Nov. 18. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Barsamian—Small wall boxes in which painted cutouts, set up like stage scenery, depict homely back-yard occasions. Also, silk screens. Through Friday, Oct. 27. (Automation House, 49 E. 68th St.)

Willi Baumeister (1889-1955)—Paintings by an early nonobjective artist. Through Dec. 29. (Hutton, 33 E. 74th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Beauchamp—Large paintings in sizzling colors by this uninhibited draftsman, some of whose charcoal drawings are also on exhibition. Through Tuesday, Oct. 31. (Knowlton, 19 E. 71st St.)

Harry Bertoia—Forty metal sculptures, in various sizes and shapes, which, when touched, emit musical sounds. Through Nov. 11. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

Paul Brach—Hazy Western landscapes. Through Tuesday, Oct. 31. (Lerner-Heller, 956 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

Alexander Calder (1898-1976)—Forty sculptures from the seventies. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

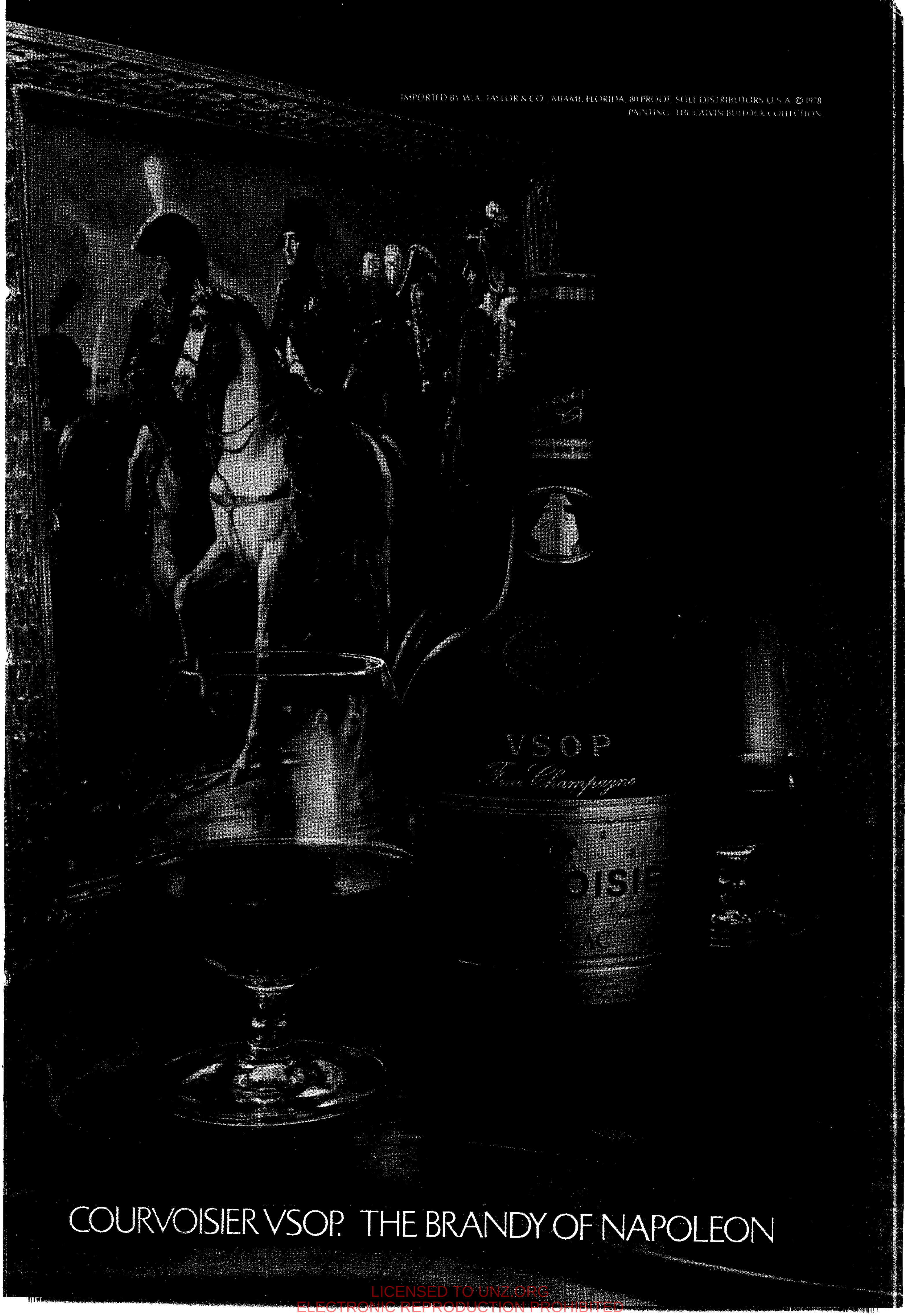
Elizabeth de Cuevas—Steel or bronze sculptures: stylized head-shaped forms are hollowed out, and abstractions of facial features are inserted. Also drawings. Through Nov. 11. (Ault, 25 E. 77th St.)

Otto Dix (1891-1969)—Vivid drawings and watercolors that reflect the social climate in Germany during the First World War and in the twenties. Curiously, this is the first one-man show in New York by this well-known artist. Through Dec. 16. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens at noon.)

Philip Guston—Drawings from the last three decades by an artist whose career has taken many stylistic (abstract, figurative, minimal) turns. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (McKee, 140 E. 63rd St.)

Tom Hardy—Not very abstract sculptures cut from sheet bronze or sheet steel and strongly suggesting flight, plus etchings and aquatints, mostly of landscapes. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Kraushaar, 1055 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Carl Holty (1900-73)—Abstract paintings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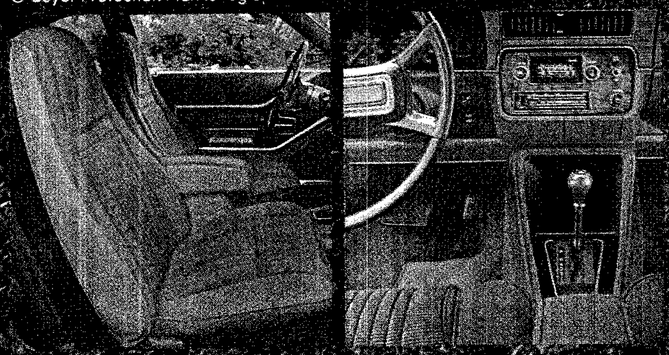

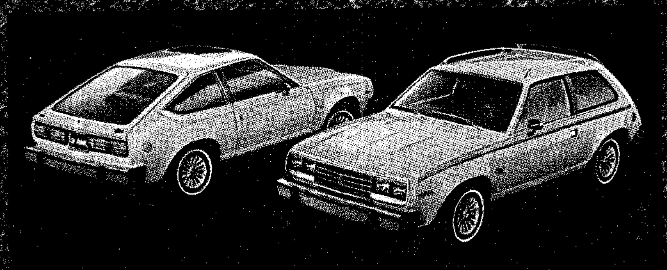

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AMC SPIRIT

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

from the forties. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Deutsch, 43 E. 80th St.)

Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid—Joint works by two artists whose previous collaborations satirized Soviet society (they emigrated from Russia to Israel in 1977). Portraits of Carter, Begin, and Sadat are included in the current show. Through Nov. 11. (Feldman, 33 E. 74th St. Open Mondays.)

Harry Marinsky—Bronzes, including a series of cyclists. Through Nov. 11. (Rolly-Michaux, 943 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

Agnes Martin—Small, delicate ink-and-wash drawings, all on a grid pattern and done in the sixties, before this artist retired to New Mexico, took an eight-year break, and emerged with her celebrated stripe paintings. Through Nov. 8. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Gari Melchers (1860-1932)—Traditionalist oils of another generation (portraits full of character, sunlit interiors, New York Harbor) in a show that is also brightened by a number of small, seemingly offhand watercolors. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Roger Mühl—Landscapes done in the South of France in soft colors that are laid on the canvas like icing on a cake; also, edible-looking still-lifes of cherry pies and tarts. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Stephen Polin—Mildly surrealist paintings. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Antoine Poncet—Large, graceful free-form whorls of marble or bronze, plus a polished granite specimen nine feet tall that is too big for the gallery and stands outside on the corner. Through Nov. 15. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Lee Savage—Drawings and pastels, some of them taken from a life-class notebook and some of them formal presentations. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Krasner, 1043 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

John Storrs (1885-1956)—Paintings from the thirties by an artist who worked in Purist- and Cubist-derived styles. Through Nov. 18. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Hap Tivey / Abbie Zabar—Abstract paintings and drawings. / Paper collages of landscapes. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Blum-Helman, 13 E. 75th St.)

Anton van Dalen—Large paintings done in pale colors and with meticulous care, in which doves, other birds, and three-dimensional geometric forms are arranged in grid patterns—a remarkable shift from his recent (1976) depictions of lower East Side savagery. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Albert York—Small, plain paintings (of people, animals, and landscapes), whose very plainness probably contributes to the strange aura that they emanate. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Davis & Long, 746 Madison Ave., at 65th St.)

Jack Zajac—Semi-abstract sculptures, most of them representing struggling rams and goats. The indoor pieces, done in bronze and marble, are at the Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through Saturday, Nov. 4.), and the outdoor pieces are at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus (through Feb. 28).

Group Shows—At **hirschl & adler**, 21 E. 70th St.: Paintings, drawings, sculptures, and photographs by artists who were exhibited at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery. They include Matisse, Nadelman, Cézanne, Demuth, Steichen. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (A complementary show—ending Saturday—is at the Washburn Gallery, 42 E. 57th St.)... **kerr**, 49 E. 82nd St.: Nineteenth-century landscapes by Martin Johnson Heade, Fitz Hugh Lane, John Frederick Kensett, and others whose light-filled nature scenes have been given the term Luminism. Starts Thursday, Oct. 26. (Open Mondays.)... **perls**, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: One of Rouault's beefy judges and a splendid small gouache of a woman's head by Picasso are among the items of special interest in this group show of Modern Masters. Through Saturday, Nov. 4.... **reed**, 120 E. 78th St.: A benefit show of paintings and works on paper by current and former faculty members of the Yale School of Art, among them Josef Albers, Willem de Kooning, Alex Katz, Mel Bochner, and James Rosenquist. Through Nov. 18. (Opens at 1.)... **wildenstein**, 19 E. 64th St.: The development of the landscape genre in Europe between the seventeenth century and the early nineteenth century is the basis of a benefit loan exhibit here. The paintings and drawings are by Ruisdael, Corot, Turner, and others. Through Nov. 22. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

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GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Joel Bass—Abstract collages made of metal foil and snippets of painted metal which all seem to have been flattened out with an electric iron. Through Nov. 8. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

George Bellows (1882-1925) **and Joseph Golinkin** (1896-1977)—Lithographs by two artists who looked to sporting events and street scenes for their subjects. Through Dec. 1. (Spectrum, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Judith Bernstein—Charcoal drawings of stove bolts, done in huge, Oldenburgian proportions. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Iolas, 52 E. 57th St.)

Charles Burchfield (1893-1967)—Oils and watercolors from the thirties and forties. Through Nov. 25. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Marischa Burckhardt—Indian cotton painted in startling colors and sometimes folded and cut into simple collage patterns. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Parsons-Dreyfuss, 24 W. 57th St.)

Giorgio Cavallon—New Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

William Clutz—This artist, who has a fondness for New York scenes, simplifies them almost to the point of abstraction but always manages to catch the glare of sunlight reflected from automobile windshields, shop windows, and so on. The works are in oil on paper or canvas, and pastels. Through Wednesday, Nov. 1. (Alonzo, 30 W. 57th St.)

Martha Diamond—Abstract paintings, most of them of simple shapes representing monuments or towers, done on aluminum in thick oil strokes against equally thick, contrasting backgrounds. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Dominic L. Di Mare—Lightweight, foot-high geometric constructions, many of which incorporate colored-paper cords. Through Nov. 25. (Duhl, 31 W. 54th St. Opens at noon.)

Lawrence Fane—Sculptures based on rock formations and done in wood, welded steel, or cast bronze, plus pencil drawings of the kinds of rocks that inspired them. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Pearl, 29 W. 57th St.)

Jackie Ferrara—Six new constructions, more or less pyramidal in form, consisting of hundreds—probably thousands—of sugar-pine tiles stacked together. There are also drawings of the works. Through Nov. 9. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Emil Ganso (1895-1941)—Woodcuts, lithographs, and intaglio etchings of nudes, landscapes, and still-lifes. Through Nov. 18. (Sumers, 50 W. 57th St.)

Peter Golfinopoulos—Recent abstract paintings. Through Nov. 16. (Goodman, 38 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Ira Joel Haber—Boxes that contain houses set in harsh environments of boulders and scrubby trees. Also works on paper. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Pam Adler, 50 W. 57th St.)

Grace Hartigan—New paintings based on Biblical and mythological themes, and a huge one evocative of the Lascaux caves, all done in the fresh colors and free-form sort of drawing that are characteristic of her work. Through Nov. 7. (Genesis, 41 E. 57th St.)

Anne Healy—Sail-like triangles of bronze screening, nearly nine and a half feet tall, plus models and photographs of other sculptural pieces, projected and realized. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St.)... ¶ One large sculpture, two models, and twelve photographs. Through Wednesday, Nov 1. (A.I.R., 97 Wooster St.)

Tom Holland—Large sculptures cut from sheet aluminum and fibre glass, bolted together like collages and painted with resins. Some are freestanding, and others are meant to hang on the wall. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Droll-Kolbert, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Robert Hudson—Primary colors applied to primed canvas, and works on paper by a San Francisco artist previously known here for his three-dimensional constructions made of sticks and cowboy paraphernalia. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Ed Kerns—This artist mounts his canvas on fibre board, cakes it with layers of oils and acrylics, slits it, sews it together roughly, and paints it some more. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

Irving Kriesberg—Expressionist oils covering an eight-year period, and pastels completed this summer while the artist was at the MacDowell Colony. Through Nov. 10. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

George Kuehn—Maquettes for much larger steel pieces by a sculptor who achieves what looks like a precarious balance in his work by chaining large sections of it together. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (Sachs, 29 W. 57th St.)

Henry Moore—A dozen small bronzes, five drawings, and thirty prints. Through Dec. 16. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

Kenneth Noland—No target paintings; instead, works elicited from wet rag-paper pulp. Through Nov. 11. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Kenzo Okada—Landscapes done mostly in Japan: rowboats drawn up on the sand or anchored offshore, a grove of trees obscured by fog, an ancient wall decorated with autumn foliage. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

Betty Parsons—One of this artist-dealer's former associates, Jock Truman, had a dream some time ago in which he saw seven big, fanciful totem poles made by Mrs. Parsons standing against the back wall of his gallery. The dream so affected him that he talked her into vastly increasing the scale of the small driftwood constructions she had been working on all along, and arranged with her regular gallery, Kornblee, for a joint show. The result is a fine exhibition of large, colorful sculptures—some of them ten feet tall—made mostly from flotsam and jetsam, assembled by a woman who seems to turn everything she touches into art. There are also a number of paintings and drawings. And three of the envisioned totem poles are standing against the back wall of the Truman Gallery. Through Nov. 11. (Truman, 38 E. 57th St., and Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

I. Rice Pereira (1905-71)—Late works by the geometric abstractionist. Through Nov. 11. (Zarre, 41 E. 57th St.)

Stephen Posen—Several varieties of realism are at work in the compositions of this skilled painter. For example, a Photo-Realist background is combined with a trompe-l'oeil foreground, and the combination results in a surrealist whole. His very latest paintings, inspired by the recent Monet show, apply his special technique to flower arrangements. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Richard Pousette-Dart—Paintings, many with

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

an overall design of geometric symbols, from the last ten years. Through Nov. 30. (Crispo, 41 E. 57th St. Mondays through Fridays, 11:30 to 4:30; Saturdays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

Martha Ryther—Engaging paintings done in reverse on glass by the eighty-two-year-old widow of Morris Kantor—her first show in New York in nearly forty years. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St.)

Arline Shulman—Large, antic sculptures, made of geometric steel forms welded together in what sometimes seems defiance of the law of gravity. The pieces are painted in bright, solid colors, which give them the look of outsize toys. Through Friday, Nov. 3. (Arras, 29 W. 57th St.)

James Tissot (1836-1902)—Etchings and drypoints, portraits mostly. Through Nov. 22. (Associated American Artists, 663 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St. Open Mondays.)

Joyce Weinstein—Large, colorful abstracts in which each brushstroke (or swipe of the finger) stands out on its own. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (Long, 7 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **aaron berman**, 50 W. 57th St.: Works in a variety of styles and mediums by Walkowitz, Goings, Chryssa, and others. Through Nov. 15. . . . **gladstone-villani**, a new gallery at 38 E. 57th St.: An exhibit of works on paper includes large patterns made up of little medallions, each of which tells a story, by Robin Lehrer; abstract patterns with some figurative elements by Richard Kalina; and intricate designs worked out in color on a grid by Gloria Klein. Through Nov. 11. . . . **janis**, 6 W. 57th St.: Paintings and sculptures by a number of Europeans, among them Giacometti, Picasso, and Dubuffet. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. . . . **midtown**, 11 E. 57th St.: Ballet studies of the thirties and forties by four artists: Paul Cadmus, Emlen Etting, Waldo Pierce, and Paul Meltsner. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. . . . **nobé**, 250 W. 57th St.: Abstract works on paper by Deborah Salt, Ned Smyth, Susan Smith, and others. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. . . . **alex rosenberg**, 20 W. 57th St.: A show entitled "Woman: from Nostalgia to Now" offers works by Lindner, Rivers, Segal, Balthus, Pascin, Avery, and other big names. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Open Mondays.) . . . **washburn**, 42 E. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and photographs (by Peggy Bacon, Charles Demuth, Paul Strand, and others) that were exhibited in Alfred Stieglitz's Intimate Gallery between 1926 and 1929. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (A complementary show is at Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 21 E. 70th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Natvar Bhavsar—Color-field paintings on canvas panels and on paper. Through Nov. 11. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

Jeffrey Brosk—A full-scale wooden model of a projected steel-and-concrete piece, twelve feet high and sixty-six feet long, entitled "Ebbets Field." Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Sculpture Now, 142 Greene St.)

Hilo Chen—Photo-Realist paintings of women in bathtubs, on a par with calendar art. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

David Diao—Large new nonobjective paintings, these with a Constructivist flavor and handsomely related colors. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (115 Spring Street Gallery, second floor. Opens at 1.)

Arline Hershberg / Edith Seltzer—Unstretched canvases stained with acrylics, some suggesting landscapes and some batik designs. Through Nov. 5. / Collages that have a certain delicacy despite the found metal objects—a clutch plate, a drain, a rusted strip of sheet iron—they are centered on. Through Sunday, Oct. 29. (Pleiades, 152 Wooster St. Open Sundays.)

Donald Judd—Seventeen handsomely carpentered plywood boxes, hung on the wall at eye level so that the variations in their interior design can be appreciated. Also, half a dozen etchings of the plans for the boxes. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Friedrich, 393 West Broadway. Opens at noon.)

Richard Long—Four circles laid out on the floor like rugs; the largest, sixteen feet across, is made of pieces of New Jersey bluestone, and the others, variously, of red slate, charred fragments from an old Hudson River pier, and sixty-eight pieces of driftwood scavenged from the River Avon. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Sperone Westwater Fischer, 142 Greene St.)

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Paul Mogensen—Two back-to-back exhibits of paintings. Through Thursday, Nov. 2: Five groups of solid-color canvases arranged in mathematical progressions. Starting Saturday, Nov. 4: A new group of spirals. (Boone, 420 West Broadway.)

Elizabeth Murray—Abstract oils, some of them on vaguely star-shaped canvases. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Richard Pettibone / Buky Schwartz—Small wall constructions involving, say, a *Playboy* nude, an Ingres portrait, a detail of a Vermeer, a snapshot, and so on, all of which are, almost incredibly, painted in oil on canvas. / Two closed-circuit-TV installations that involve gallery visitors, and a videotape showing the artist in his studio. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Joanna Pousette-Dart—The discrete rectangular forms that in the past made up this artist's large abstract paintings have been succeeded by softer-looking curtains of color. Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

Dorothea Rockburne—Colored-pencil arcs, circles on folded and varnished vellum and kraft paper. Through Nov. 21. (Weber, 420 West Broadway.)

Arlene Sklar-Weinstein—Collages in which the background, which looks like wallpaper, has been torn open (or appears to have been torn open) revealing photographs or painting beneath. Through Thursday, Nov. 2. (Westbroadway, 431 West Broadway.)

Group Shows—At **the drawing center**, 137 Greene St.: Among the exhibitors in a show introducing new artists are Ann Turnley, who implants cutout designs in the pulp from which she makes paper; Milo Reice, who illustrates classics ("Chaucer's First Date" is the title of one piece); and Paul Caranicas, who makes fine perspective drawings of abandoned Coast Artillery emplacements. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Open Mondays; open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **soho 20**, 99 Spring St.: Eight women artists—paintings, prints, and sculptures. Through Wednesday, Nov. 1. (Opens at noon.)

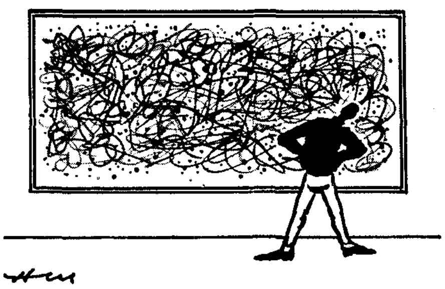
OTHER GALLERIES

Ida Appelbroog—Wall boxes in which paper cutouts tell dramatic stories, most of which arise from the viewer's imagination. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Sragow, 43 Fifth Ave., at 11th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Claire Moore—Graphite-on-paper compositions that incorporate various words. Through Saturday, Nov. 4. (Freidus, 158 Lafayette St., near Grand St.)

Judith Murray—Abstract oils. Through Nov. 11. (The Clocktower, 108 Leonard St., four blocks south of Canal St., at Broadway. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Frank Stella—Forty working drawings, a maquette, and three wall constructions over ten feet tall, from the series "Targowica" (1973). Through Tuesday, Oct. 31. (Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 9; Fridays, 11 to 4:30.)



PHOTOGRAPHY

Richard Avedon—The Metropolitan Museum is showing his high-fashion photographs from the last three decades. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Michael Bishop / Weegee (1899-1968)—Recent color prints. / Two scrapbooks of photographs have been taken apart by the gallery and mounted here. (The subject is this city's *demimonde* in the forties and fifties.) Through Saturday, Oct. 28. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Marie Cosindas / Ray Metzker—Still-lifes and portraits by a photographer (one-time painter) whose manipulations of Polaroid-film emulsions achieve the soft look of oils. / Black-and-white abstractions. Through Sunday, Oct. 29. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.)

Elliott Erwitt—A retrospective that consists of a hundred and fifty prints. Through Nov. 25. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jan Groover—A series of still-lifes in color. Through Nov. 11. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Erich Hartmann and Jill Lynne—Both photographers are showing experimental works. The former uses laser light, and the latter uses a color copier. Through Nov. 25. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Art Sinsabaugh—Forty sharp-focus landscapes (they were made with an outsize view camera) of the Midwest and the East are on view at the Museum of Modern Art. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Karen Tweedy-Holmes—Black-and-white pictures of Victorian façades and interiors, plus color prints of West Indies flora and fauna. Through Nov. 9. (Carlton, 127 E. 69th St.)

Dudley Witney—This Canadian photographer is showing pictures he made of American and Canadian resorts for the book "Summer Places," written by Brendan Gill. Through Friday, Oct. 27. (Gotham Book Mart, 41 W. 47th St.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The seven hundred objects on loan from eight Dresden museums represent more than five hundred years of art collecting by patrons in that city. The show contains paintings (by Bellotto, Holbein, Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Rubens, Vermeer), drawings, Meissen and Oriental porcelains, armor, and jewelry. Through Jan. 14. . . . ¶ The reconstructed Temple of Dendur, in a setting recalling its original home on the Nile, is receiving its devotees in the Sackler Wing, at the north end of the museum. For the moment, extra exhibition hours—Thursday evenings, from 5 to 8:45—have been tacked onto the museum's regular schedule. . . . ¶ Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century drawings by North European artists. From the Lehman Collection. Starts Thursday, Oct. 26. . . . **photography:** Richard Avedon's fashion prints. Through Nov. 5. (The museum is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—More than a hundred and seventy works by Matisse, ranging from major paintings to large paper cutouts. From the museum's holdings. Starts Friday, Oct. 27. . . . ¶ Drawings, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and graphics produced by Russian artists in the years between 1912 and 1930. Through Jan. 2. . . . **photography:** Art Sinsabaugh's landscapes and cityscapes. Through Tuesday, Oct. 31. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A comprehensive retrospective of Mark Rothko's paintings and works on paper. Starts Friday, Oct. 27. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Claes Oldenburg has built two large structures, named the Mouse Mu-

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seum and Ray Gun Wing, whose interior and exterior shapes are suggested by their titles. Visitors walk inside the darkened structures to view lighted cases filled with the artist's drawings and objects. Through Nov. 26. . . . ¶ An exhibit of early Abstract Expressionist paintings (covering the years 1935 to 1949), by Baziotes, de Kooning, Krasner, Stamos, and others. Through Dec. 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 9, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A comprehensive show of the arts of ancient Nubia and the Sudan dates from the fourth millennium to the twelfth century A.D. The wide range of objects includes gold jewelry, stone sculptures, ceramics, and a fresco. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ Fifty-four Haitian artists (most of them self-taught) are represented in an exhibition of paintings and sculptures whose themes are taken from indigenous culture and history. Through Nov. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Asia House, 112 E. 64th St.—A show of classical Indian sculptures from the Gupta period, fourth to seventh centuries A.D., contains sandstone images of Buddha (Gupta-period sculptors established Buddha's "human" appearance), and Hindu temple sculptures. Through Dec. 3. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The cynosure of a display of "Ornament in the Twentieth Century" is the vividly colored Rolls-Royce once owned by the Beatles. Not to be overlooked, however, is the welded-metal hippopotamus bathtub designed by François-Xavier Lalanne. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ The second annual exhibit of postcard designs (both the original designs and the cards printed from them) contains the efforts of Edward Koren, Martha Graham, Betye Saar, David Hockney, and others. Through Dec. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—More than ninety drawings (in pen, chalk, pencil, and wash) by Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Through Nov. 26. . . . ¶ French medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts. Through Dec. 3. . . . ¶ About forty autograph letters, generally romantic in content, composed by Voltaire, Haydn, Elizabeth I, and others. Through Dec. 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—Gold and silver pieces (saltcellars, tankards, bowls, and so forth) by New York craftsmen, mostly. The earliest object is a spoon dated 1678. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 2033 Fifth Ave., at 125th St.—An exhibit of Richard Mayhew's semi-abstract landscape paintings and drawings. Through Sunday, Oct. 29. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 6, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 580-9830, for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424, for Carnegie Hall 247-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, Oct. 25: A new production of Smetana's "The Bartered Bride" (in English), with Teresa Stratas, Nicolai Gedda, Jon Vickers, and Martti Talvela; conducted by James Levine. (A benefit performance; for tickets, call 582-7500.). . . ¶ Thursday evening, Oct. 26: "Rigoletto," with Judith Blegen, Isola Jones, Cornell MacNeil, Neil Shicoff, and Philip Booth; Giuseppe Patanè. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Oct. 27: "La Traviata," with Eugenia Moldoveanu, Carlo Bergonzi, and Ingvar Wixell; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Oct. 28: "Fidelio," with Hildegard Behrens, Roberta Peters, James King, Kurt Moll, Siegmund Nimsgern, and John Cheek; Karl Böhm. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Oct. 28: "Rigoletto," with Judith Blegen, Isola Jones, Cornell MacNeil, Neil Shicoff, and Philip Booth; Giuseppe Patanè. . . . ¶ Monday evening, Oct. 30: "The Bartered Bride" (in English), with Teresa Stratas, Nicolai Gedda, Jon Vickers, and Martti Talvela; James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Oct. 31: "Rigoletto," with Gail Robinson, Isola Jones, Cornell MacNeil, Neil Shicoff, and Philip Booth; Giuseppe Patanè. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Nov. 1: "La Traviata," with Eugenia Moldoveanu, Carlo Bergonzi, and Ingvar Wixell; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Nov. 2: "Carmen," with Elena Obraztsova, Leona Mitchell, Guy Chauvet, and James Morris; Giuseppe Patanè. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Nov. 3: "The Bartered Bride," with Teresa Stratas, Nicolai Gedda, Jon Vickers, and Martti Talvela; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Nov. 4: "Rigoletto," with Mariana Niculescu, Isola Jones, Ingvar Wixell, Neil Shicoff, and Jerome Hines; Giuseppe Patanè. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Nov. 4: "Carmen," with Elena Obraztsova, Leona Mitchell, Guy Chauvet, and James Morris; Giuseppe Patanè. (Evenings at 8; on Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 7:30. Matinées at 2.)

New York City Opera—Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 2: "Carmen," with Ann Howard, Sharon Daniels, Ermanno Mauro, and Charles Long; conducted by Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8: "The Magic Flute" (in English), with Faye Robinson, June Anderson, Gerald Grahame, Thomas Jamerson, and Ara Berberian; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Friday, Oct. 27, at 8: "La Fanciulla del West," with Marilyn Zschau, Jacque Trussel, and Charles Long; Victor De Renzi. . . . ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 2: "Street Scene," with Eileen Schauler, Catherine Malfitano, Alan Kays, and William Chapman; John Mauceri. . . . ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8: "Andrea Chénier," with Judith Ehrlich, Ermanno Mauro, and Pablo Elvira; Victor De Renzi. . . . ¶ Sunday, Oct. 29, at 1: "Le Coq d'Or" (in English), with Gianna Rolandi, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, William Wildermann, and Abram Morales; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Sunday, Oct. 29, at 7: "Carmen," with Ann Howard, Faye Robinson, Augusto Paglialunga, and Charles Long; Judith Somogi. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Awilda Verdejo, Lando Bartolini, and Richard Fredricks; Judith Somogi. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8: "La Traviata," with Diana Soviero, Henry Price, and Pablo Elvira; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8: "Andrea Chénier," with Judith Ehrlich, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Victor De Renzi. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 3, at 8: "The Magic Flute" (in English), with Gwenlynn Little, Judith Dickison, Bruce Reed, Dominic Cossa, and Ara Berberian; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 4, at 2: "The Turk in Italy" (in English), with Beverly Sills, Alan Kays, Alan Titus, Spiro Malas, and James Billings; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8: "La Fanciulla del West," with Eileen Schauler, Ermanno Mauro, and Charles Long; Sergiu Comissiona. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 877-4727. Through Sunday, Nov. 12.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—James Levine conducting on Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8:30; Friday, Oct. 27, at 2; Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8:30; and Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 7:30 (all with Mark Zeltser, piano); and Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8:30; Friday, Nov. 3, at 2; and Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 7:30 (all with Sol Greitzer, viola). . . . ¶ Andre Kostelanetz conducting a non-subscription concert on Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8:30 (with Abbey Simon, piano).

Cleveland Orchestra—Lorin Maazel conducting. CARNEGIE HALL: Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8, an all-Berlioz program, with Robert Vernon, viola. . . . ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8, a performance of Britten's "War Requiem," with Annabelle Bernard, soprano; John Alexander, tenor; Sherrill Milnes, baritone; the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus; and the Newark Boys Chorus. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL: Friday, Oct. 27, at 8, a varied program, with Daniel Majeske, violin. . . . WHITMAN HALL, Brooklyn College (859-1180): Sunday, Oct. 29, at 3, a varied program; no soloists.

Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra—Kurt Masur conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8, with Karl Suske, violin, and Dietmar Hallmann, viola; and Friday, Oct. 27, at 8, with Peter Rosel, piano.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8.)

Greenwich Philharmonia—David Gilbert conducting a program of music by Kurt Weill, with Barbara Martin, soprano, and Richard Young, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8.)

Musica Aeterna—Frederic Waldman conducting. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8, with Murray Perahia, piano. . . . ¶ Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 5, at 5:30, both with Emanuel Ax, piano.)

Tarack Chamber Ensemble—A chamber group that performs without a conductor. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Clarion Concert—Newell Jenkins conducting the American première of Vivaldi's opera "Il Farnace" in concert form, with Elaine Bonazzi, mezzo-soprano; Daniel Collins, countertenor; Frederick Hammond, harpsichord; and others. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8.)

I Musici—Pina Carmirelli, violin, and eleven other musicians who perform without a conductor, in an all-Vivaldi program. The first of two concerts. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8.)

New Little Orchestra Concert—Thomas Scherman directing a performance of Strauss's "The Gypsy Baron" in concert form, with, among others, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., narrator; Alexandra Hunt and Susan Belling, sopranos; Harry Theyard, tenor; and the Orpheon Chorale. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8.)

Mannes Orchestra—Semyon Bychkov conducting. (Pope Auditorium, Fordham University, Columbus Ave. at 60th St. Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Choral Music—John Alldis, Michael Hammond, Robert DeCormier, and others directing a concert of choral music published over the past five hundred years by the Oxford University Press. Performed by the New York Choral Society, Cappella Nova, the Canticum Novum Singers, the Sine Nomine Singers, the Oratorio Society of New York, the St. Cecilia Chorus, and the Dessoff Choirs. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8. For information about free tickets, call 679-7300, Ext. 245.)

RECITALS

Earl Wild—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 8.)

Nathaniel Rosen—Cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8.)

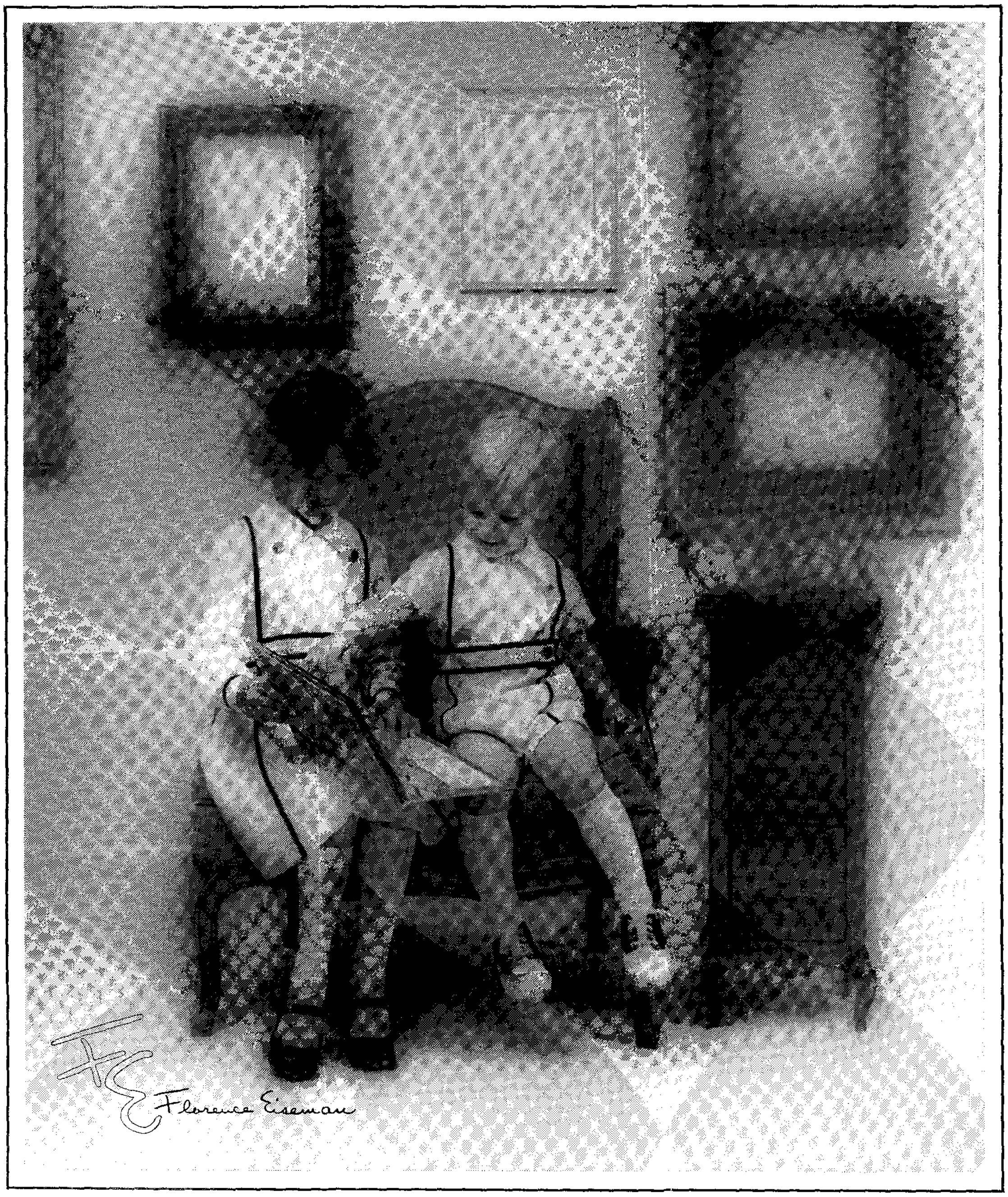
Romeros Quartet—Classical guitarists. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8.)

League-ISCM—The first in this season's series of seven programs of contemporary music, this one celebrating Elliott Carter's seventieth birthday and including early works by him. With Susan Davenny Wyner, soprano; Yehudi Wyner and Alan Feinberg, pianos; Paul Jacobs, harpsichord; and others. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 8.)

Elly Ameling—Soprano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, Oct. 27, at 8.)

Alexandre Lagoya—Classical guitarist. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8.)

Ronald Roseman, Ani Kavafian, Kenneth Cooper, and Richard Tarushkin—Oboe, violin, harpsichord, and viola da gamba. (Grace Rainey



A little child with laughing look,
A lovely white unwritten book—*John Masefield*

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8.)

Lazar Berman—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 3.... ¶ Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8.)

Alicia de Larrocha—Piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 3.)

Beethoven Society—Claude Frank and Jaime Laredo playing three Beethoven sonatas (including the "Kreutzer") for piano and violin. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 3. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—At Alice Tully Hall—Sunday, Oct. 29, at 5, and Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 7:30: Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; Osian Ellis, harp; Paula Robison, flute; James Buswell, violin; and others.... ¶ Friday, Nov. 3, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 5, at 5: Jaime Laredo, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; Gervase De Peyer, clarinet; Barry Tuckwell, horn; and others.

Carlos Montoya—Flamenco guitarist. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 7:30.)

Robin McCabe—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 8.)

Eastman Trio—An all-Beethoven program. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Sunday, Oct. 29, at 8.)

Emil Gilels—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, Oct. 30, at 8.)

Nadia Koutzen—Violin. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, Oct. 30, at 8.)

Santos Ojeda—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Oct. 30, at 8.)

Lily von Ballmoos—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8.)

Anton Kuerti—The first in a series of eight recitals presenting the cycle of Beethoven piano sonatas. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 8.)

Frederica von Stade—Mezzo-soprano, in a benefit recital. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 9. For tickets, call 288-0700, Ext. 32.)

Eugene List—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Bruno Canino, piano; Mitchell Stern, violin; Sarah Clarke, viola; and Jerry Grossman, cello. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8.)

Shura Cherkassky—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8.)

Concert-Party—The second in a series of seven concerts, this one entitled "A Musical Evening in London, 1650-1750," performed by the Baroque Music Masters, with Paul Sperry, tenor. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, Nov. 3, at 8. For information about tickets, call 752-4907.)

Juilliard String Quartet—The first in a series of three all-Schubert concerts, this one with Bernard Greenhouse, cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 3.)

Neal La Monaco—Cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8.)

Cleveland Quartet—With Paula Robison, flute. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts., is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Knicks vs. Indiana, Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8.... RUTGERS UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CENTER, Piscataway, N.J. (all games at 8): Nets vs. Golden State, Wednesday, Oct. 25.... ¶ Nets vs. Cleveland, Friday, Oct. 27.... ¶ Nets vs. Boston, Saturday, Oct. 28.... ¶ Nets vs. Milwaukee, Wednesday, Nov. 1.... ¶ Nets vs. Seattle, Friday, Nov. 3. (For information about tickets, call 201 935-8888.)

College Football—SATURDAY, OCT. 28: Army vs. Colgate, at West Point, at 1:30.... ¶ Brown vs. Holy Cross, at Providence, at 1:30.... ¶ Columbia vs. Rutgers, at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, at 1:30.... ¶ Cornell vs. Dartmouth, at Ithaca, at 1:30.... ¶ Fordham vs. Kings Point, at Fordham, at 1:30.... ¶ Navy vs. Pittsburgh, at Annapolis, at 2.... ¶ Pennsylvania vs. Yale, at Philadelphia, at 1:30.... ¶ Princeton vs. Harvard, at Princeton, at 1:30.... SATURDAY, NOV. 4: Army vs. Air Force, at West Point, at 1:30.... ¶ Dartmouth vs. Columbia, at Hanover, at 1:30.... ¶ Harvard vs. Brown, at Cambridge, at 1:30.... ¶ Manhattan vs. Marist, at Mt. St. Michael Field, at 1.... ¶ Princeton vs. Pennsylvania, at Princeton, at 1:30.... ¶ Trinity vs. Amherst, at Hartford, at 1:30.... ¶ Williams vs. Wesleyan, at Williamstown, at 1:30.... ¶ Yale vs. Cornell, at New Haven, at 1:30.

Professional Football—Sunday, Oct. 29: Giants vs. New Orleans Saints, at New Orleans.... ¶ Jets vs. New England Patriots, at Foxboro.

Hockey—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Rangers vs. Vancouver Canucks, Wednesday, Oct. 25, at 7:35.... ¶ Rangers vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Sunday, Oct. 29, at 7:35.... NASSAU COLISEUM (all games at 8:05): Islanders vs. Vancouver Canucks, Saturday, Oct. 28.... ¶ Islanders vs. Colorado Rockies, Tuesday, Oct. 31.... ¶ Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, Nov. 4. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 516 794-9100.)

Horse Show—National Horse Show. (Madison Square Garden. Tuesday, Oct. 31, through Sunday, Nov. 5. Competitions daily at 2 and 7:30.)

Racing—At AQUEDUCT: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:30, and Sundays at 1:05, from Wednesday, Oct. 25, through Sunday, Dec. 31. The Discovery Handicap, Saturday, Oct. 28; the Long Island Handicap, Sunday, Oct. 29; and the Ladies Handicap, Saturday, Nov. 4.... MEADOWLANDS: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Dec. 30. The Meadowlands Cup Handicap, Thursday, Nov. 2.... LAUREL, Md.: Weekdays at 12:30; through Saturday, Dec. 30. The Laurel Futurity, Saturday, Oct. 28, and the Washington, D.C., International, Saturday, Nov. 4.

Trotting—At Roosevelt Raceway, Westbury: Weeknights at 8; through Monday, Dec. 11.

ET ALIA

(The New York Parks Department number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 755-4100.)

Poetry Readings—Thomas Lux and Gerald Stern reading from their own works. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Thursday, Oct. 26, at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)... ¶ Cynthia Macdonald and Julio Marzan reading from their own poetry. (Wollman Auditorium, Cooper Union, 51 Astor Pl. Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Auctions—At SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Thursday, Oct. 26, at 10:15 and 2: American Indian art, from many sources.... ¶ Friday, Oct. 27, at 10:15 and 2: American nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings, drawings, and sculptures by such artists as Frederic Edwin Church, Thomas Hart Benton, Andrew Wyeth, and Frederic Remington; from various owners.... ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 2: French furniture, from a number of owners.... ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 1, at 8: Impressionist and other modern paintings and sculptures, from several collectors. Exhibition starts Friday, Oct. 27. Admission by card only; for information, call 472-8467.... ¶ Thursday, Nov. 2, at 2: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century drawings and watercolors, from many owners. Exhibition starts Saturday, Oct. 28.... ¶ Thursday, Nov. 2, at 8: Contemporary art, from various collectors. Exhibition starts Saturday, Oct. 28. Admission by card only.... CHRISTIE'S, Park Ave. at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5.) Friday, Oct. 27, at 10:30: The Burrell Collection of Wagnerian musical manuscripts and autograph letters.... ¶ Saturday, Oct. 28, at 10:30 and 2: Chinese Export porcelains and European porcelains and pottery, from many owners.

Daylight Saving Time—Ends on Sunday, Oct. 29. Turn the clock back an hour.

"There's a time for everything," says Douglas Cooper. "Even this."

by Ed Curran

I suggested to Mr. Cooper that possibly a good way for him to sell the emerald he is holding (along with those shown below) might be to let me tell you about it.

After all, I reminded him, I've written the Cooper advertising for some time now. Perhaps I could explain some things that, coming from him, might sound a bit boastful.

As is his way, Mr. Cooper nodded suspiciously at this transparent bit of larceny. (But there's a time for everything, he said. Even this.)

As far as describing emeralds go, it is best to remember that emeralds are beyond description.

That little fact not only makes my job easier, it's true.

Emeralds look a little different on—and more importantly do exotically different things to—brunettes, redheads, blondes and grays. They bring a little something special to each. Excitement. Mystery. And they certainly make a statement loud enough to be heard above the everyday, ho-hum roar.

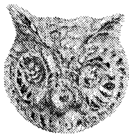
And it is more than simply an opinion shared by many that Mr. Cooper knows more about great emeralds than almost anyone else. In the late sixties and early seventies, it was the firm of F. J. Cooper that sold—stone by precious stone—the necklace that once belonged to the Imperial House of Russia.

In fact, many of the gems were sold, bought back again a year or two later, and sold again. Much to everyone's delight and satisfaction. The Cooper reputation for being able to find and offer large colored gems became firmly established.

By the way, somewhat more impressive emeralds are rarely, if ever, perfectly clear. The tiny feathers deep in the stone add to its mystery. Why? Because they define character and nobility and are proof that nature created them. Not man. Nor his machinery.

Mr. Cooper's attention span is being severely tested by all of this. He insists I get on with it and list the three magnificent emerald rings shown below—all with diamonds in platinum and/or 18 karat yellow gold. From top to bottom: $125,000, $112,500, $65,000. Mr. Cooper says he is waiting for your phone call (215) 568-6336.

P.S. The little night owl, in 14 karat gold with diamond eyes that see in the dark, comes as a lapel pin, $260; pendant and chain, $300; or cufflinks, $570, and three studs to match, $540.



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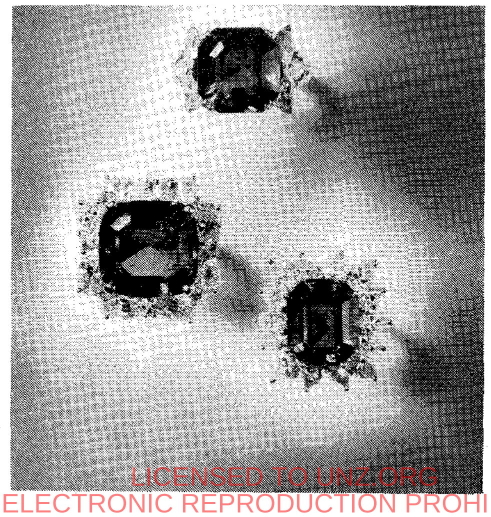
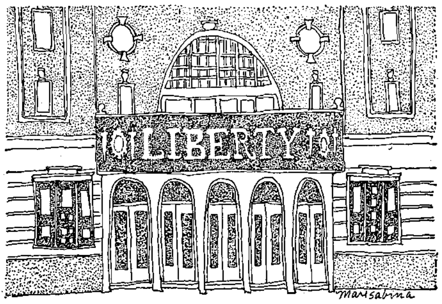


GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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ALL FILMS PLAYING AT EAST SIDE AND WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN A SECTION STARTING ON PAGE 21. FILMS PLAYING AT TIMES SQUARE AND REVIVAL HOUSES ARE SO DESCRIBED ONLY IF A DAGGER ACCOMPANIES THE THEATRE LISTING.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (677-6350; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Oct. 29: "Macunaima."
Oct. 30: Theatre closed.
Oct. 31: "Law and Order."
Nov. 1: "Hospital."
Nov. 2: "Juvenile Court."

Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Girl Friends."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through Oct. 31: "Who'll Stop the Rain" and "F.I.S.T."
From Nov. 1: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"A Slave of Love."

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Up in Smoke."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"The Wiz."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Death on the Nile."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"A Wedding."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through Oct. 31: "Tommy."
From Nov. 1: "Comes a Horseman."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"The Wiz."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Autumn Sonata."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Goin' South."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Foul Play."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
"Days of Heaven."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-0774)
"Bloodbrothers."

Gemini 1, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"Midnight Express."

Gemini 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"Midnight Express."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Big Fix."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"No Time for Breakfast."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Death on the Nile."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
Through Oct. 26: "Who'll Stop the Rain."
From Oct. 27: "Girl Friends."

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (288-3180)
"Interiors."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"The Wiz."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"Up in Smoke."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Oct. 26: "Think Dirty" and "Sex with a Smile."
Oct. 27-31: To be announced.
From Nov. 1: "Comes a Horseman."

R.K.O. 86th St., Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "The Big Fix."
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 26: "Tommy."
From Oct. 27: "Halloween."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through Oct. 31: "Heaven Can Wait."
From Nov. 1: "Comes a Horseman."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Interiors."
Theatre 2: "No Time for Breakfast."
Theatre 3: "A Slave of Love" and "The Man Who Loved Women."
Theatre 4: "Interiors."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The Black Pearl."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Boys from Brazil."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Interiors."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (586-4448)
Through Oct. 26: "An Unmarried Woman."
From Oct. 27: "Revenge of the Pink Panther."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"Bread and Chocolate."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Violette."

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"A Wedding."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A Wedding."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"Perceval."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
"Who Is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe?"

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "Grease."
Theatre 2: "Foul Play."
Theatre 3: "National Lampoon's Animal House."
Theatre 4: "Heaven Can Wait."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (874-9189)
"Interiors."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Oct. 26: "Who'll Stop the Rain" and "The Big Sleep."
Oct. 27-31: "An Unmarried Woman" and "Alex & the Gypsy."
From Nov. 1: "The Buddy Holly Story" and "Somebody Killed Her Husband."

TIMES SQUARE

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
Through Oct. 31: "Tommy." (†)
From Nov. 1: "Comes a Horseman." (†)

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"National Lampoon's Animal House." (†)

Embassy, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Heaven Can Wait." (†)
Theatre 3: "Saturday Night Fever."
Theatre 4: "Grease." (†)

Forum, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Foul Play." (†)

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"The Wiz." (†)

Loews State 1, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)
"Death on the Nile." (†)

Loews State 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5070)
"Midnight Express." (†)

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
Through Oct. 26: "Jaws 2" and "The Car."
From Oct. 27: "Halloween."

R.K.O. Cinerama 1, B'way at 47th. (975-8366)
"Up in Smoke." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 2, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
"The Big Fix." (†)

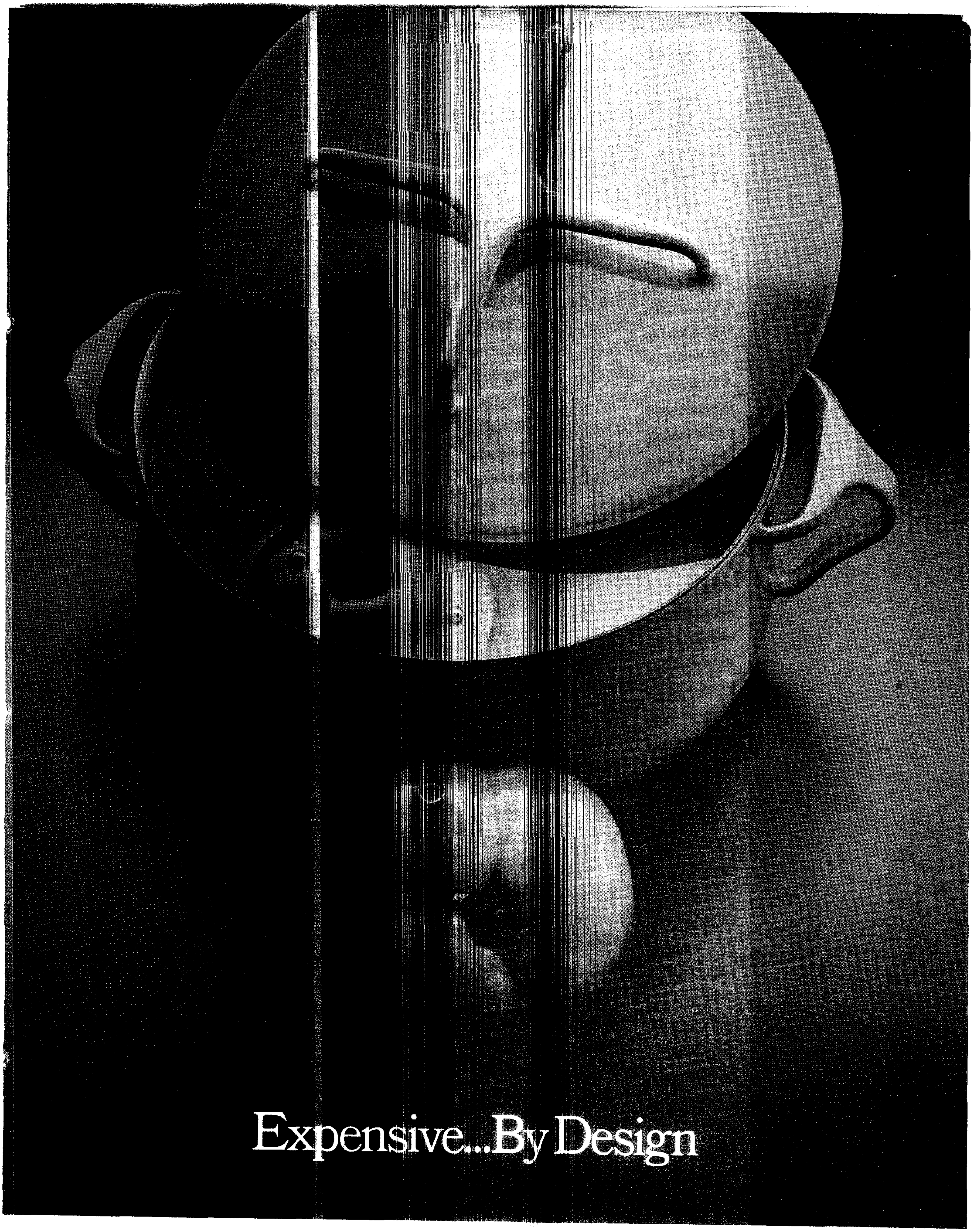
Victoria, B'way at 46th. (354-5636)
"Count Dracula and His Vampire Bride."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Oct. 25: "The Last Waltz" (1978), directed by Martin Scorsese, the final concert of the rock group The Band; and "Phantom of the Paradise" (1974), directed by Brian De Palma, with Paul Williams, William Finley, Jessica Harper, and Gerrit Graham.
Oct. 26: "The Fury" (1978), directed by Brian De Palma, with Kirk Douglas, John Cassavetes, Carrie Snodgress, Amy Irving, and Andrew Stevens; and "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore" (1975), directed by Martin Scorsese, with Ellen Burstyn, Kris Kristofferson, and Alfred Lutter.
Oct. 27: "Taxi Driver" (1976), directed by Martin Scorsese, with Robert De Niro; and "Obsession" (1976), directed by Brian De Palma, with Cliff Robertson and Geneviève Bujold.
Oct. 28: "Carrie" (1976), directed by Brian De Palma, with Sissy Spacek, John Travolta, Piper Laurie, Nancy Allen, Amy Irving, and William Katt; and "New York, New York." (†)
Oct. 29: "The Magic Flute." (†)
Oct. 30: "Alice in the Cities" (1974), in German, directed by Wim Wenders, with Rudiger Vogeler; and "Wagonmaster." (†)
Oct. 31: "Zatoichi Meets His Equal" (1971), in Japanese, directed by Yasuda Kimiyoshi; and "Sanshiro Sugata" (1943), in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa.
Nov. 1: "Masculine Feminine" (†) and "Le Gai Savoir." (†)
Nov. 2: "Antonio das Mortes" (†); and "Vidas Secas" (1963), a Brazilian film, in Portuguese, directed by Nelson Pereira dos Santos.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Oct. 25: "El" (1952), in Spanish, directed by Luis Buñuel, with Arturo de Cordova; and "Tristana" (1970), in Spanish, directed by Luis Buñuel, with Catherine Deneuve and Fernando Rey.
Oct. 26: "Cat People" (1942), directed by Jacques Tourneur, with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Tom Conway; "I Walked with a Zombie" (1943), directed by Jacques Tourneur, with Frances Dee and James Ellison; and "The Seventh Victim" (1943), directed by Mark Robson, with Tom Conway and Jean Brooks.
Oct. 27: "8½" (1963), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Marcello Mastroianni, Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale; and "Providence" (1977), directed by Alain Resnais, with Ellen Burstyn, Dirk Bogarde, John Gielgud, David Warner, and Elaine Stritch.
Oct. 28: "Midnight Cowboy" (1969), directed by John Schlesinger, with Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight; and "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" (1977), directed by Richard Brooks, with Diane Keaton, Tuesday Weld, Richard Kiley, Alan Feinstein, and Richard Gere.
Oct. 29: "Der Rosenkavalier" (1963), a Salzburg Festival performance, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Anneliese Rothenberger.
Oct. 30: "Touch of Evil" (†) and "Handle with Care." (†)
Oct. 31: "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Eva Dahlbeck, Ulla Jacobsson, Harriet Andersson, Margit Carlquist, Gunnar Björnstrand, Björn Bjelvenstam, and Jarl Kulle; and "Rules of the Game" (1939), in French, directed by Jean Renoir, with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor.
Nov. 1: "Way Down East" (†); and "The Night of the Hunter" (1955), directed by Charles Laughton, with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, Lillian Gish, James Gleason, and Evelyn Varden.
Nov. 2: "Blackmail" (†); and "Sabotage" (1936; "The Woman Alone"), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, and Desmond Tester.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Oct. 26: "Welcome to L. A."



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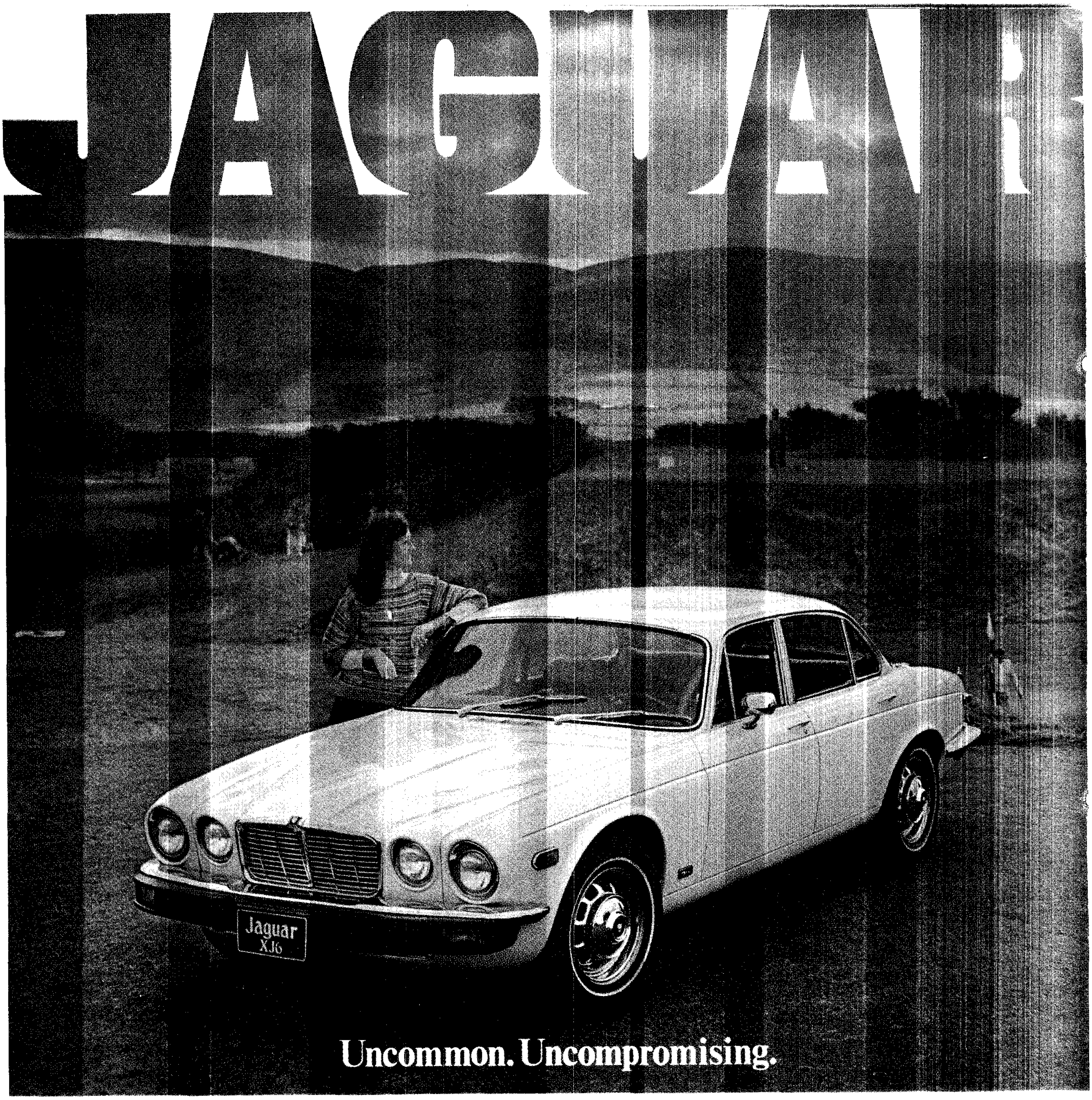

The very look of the XJ6 sedan is a statement of individuality, a bold affirmation of the fact that a machine can be made of steel and yet achieve an uncommonly sleek and sculptural beauty.

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(1977), directed by Alan Rudolph, with Keith Carradine, Sally Kellerman, Geraldine Chaplin, Harvey Keitel, Lauren Hutton, John Considine, and Sissy Spacek; and "Chinatown" (1974), directed by Roman Polanski, with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston.

Oct. 27-28: "High Anxiety" (1977), directed by Mel Brooks, with Brooks, Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman, Harvey Korman, and Ron Carey; and "The Twelve Chairs." (†)

Oct. 29-30: "The Duellists" (†); and "Elvira Madigan" (1967), in Swedish, directed by Bo Widerberg, with Thommy Berggren and Pia Degermark.

Oct. 31: "The Magician" (1958), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Ingrid Thulin, Max von Sydow, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "Nosferatu." (†)

Nov. 1-2: "Maraschino Cherry" (1978) and "Bel Ami" (1978), both X-rated films.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Oct. 25: "Je T'Aime, Je T'Aime" (1968), in French, directed by Alain Resnais; and "Enjo" (1958), in Japanese, directed by Kon Ichikawa.

Oct. 26-28: "Land of Silence and Darkness" (1971; in German), "La Soufrière" (1977; English narration), and "The Great Ecstasy of the Sculptor Steiner" (1975; in German), all films directed by Werner Herzog.

Oct. 29-30: "Effi Briest" (†) and "Une Femme Douce." (†)

Oct. 31-Nov. 1: "The Idiot" (†) and "Black Girl." (†)

From Nov. 2: "Chinese Roulette" (1977), in German, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, with Margit Carstensen; and "Beware of a Holy Whore" (1970), in German, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, with Lou Castel, Werner Schroeter, and Eddie Constantine.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Oct. 25: "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" (1964), directed by Charles Walters, with Debbie Reynolds, Harve Presnell, and Ed Begley; and "Bells Are Ringing" (1960), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Judy Holliday and Dean Martin.

Oct. 26-28: "Woman of the Year" (1942), directed by George Stevens, with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Fay Bainter, Reginald Owen, and William Bendix; and "Libeled Lady" (1936), directed by Jack Conway, with Jean Harlow, William Powell, Myrna Loy, and Spencer Tracy.

Oct. 29-30: "The Kiss" (1929), a silent film, directed by Jacques Feyder, with Greta Garbo, Conrad Nagel, and Lew Ayres; and "Queen Christina" (1934), directed by Rouben Mamoulian, with Greta Garbo, and John Gilbert.

Oct. 31-Nov. 1: "Green Dolphin Street" (†); and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1946), directed by Tay Garnett, with Lana Turner, John Garfield, Cecil Kellaway, Hume Cronyn, and Leon Ames.

From Nov. 2: "Words and Music" (†) and "Ziegfeld Follies." (†)

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Through Oct. 26: "This Land Is Mine" (1943), directed by Jean Renoir, with Maureen O'Hara, Charles Laughton, George Sanders, and Walter Slezak; and "The Beachcomber" (1938), directed by Erich Pommer, with Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Robert Newton.

Oct. 27-28: "Born Yesterday" (1950), directed by George Cukor, with Judy Holliday, William Holden, and Broderick Crawford; and "The Marrying Kind." (†)

Oct. 29-30: "Onibaba" (1963), and "Kuroneko" (1968), both films in Japanese, directed by Kaneto Shindo, with Nobuko Otowa.

Oct. 31: "Freaks" (1932), directed by Tod Browning, with Olga Baclanova, Leila Hyams, and Wallace Ford; and "Night of the Living Dead" (1968), directed by George A. Romero, with Duane Jones.

Nov. 1-2: "Caesar and Cleopatra" (†) and "Pygmalion." (†)

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Oct. 25: "Don Juan" (1926), directed by Alan Crosland, with John Barrymore, Mary Astor, and Myrna Loy; and "The Mad Genius" (1931), directed by Michael Curtiz, with John Barrymore, Boris Karloff, and Marian Marsh.

Oct. 26: "Stagecoach" (1939), directed by John Ford, with Claire Trevor and John Wayne; and "The Long Voyage Home" (1940), directed by John Ford, with Thomas Mitchell, John Wayne, Mildred Natwick, and Barry Fitzgerald.

Oct. 27-28: "The Mystery of the Wax Museum" (†); and "Doctor X" (1932), directed by Michael Curtiz, with Preston Foster, Fay Wray, Lee Tracy, and Lionel Atwill.

Oct. 29: "Romeo and Juliet" (1936), directed by George Cukor, with Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, John Barrymore, Basil Rathbone, Edna May Oliver, and C. Aubrey Smith; and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1935), directed by Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle, with James Cagney and Mickey Rooney.

Oct. 30: "One in a Million" (1937), directed by Sidney Lanfield, with Sonja Henie and Adolphe Menjou; and "Second Fiddle." (†)

Oct. 31: "My Sin" (1931), directed by George Abbott, with Tallulah Bankhead, Fredric March, and Harry Davenport; and "All of Me" (1934), directed by James Flood, with Fredric March, Miriam Hopkins, and George Raft.

Nov. 1: "For Me and My Gal" (†); and "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Judy Garland and Margaret O'Brien.

Nov. 2: "Mildred Pierce" (†) and "Flamingo Road." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Oct. 26 at 2:30: An Italian film, to be announced. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 6: "La Signora di Tutti" (1934), in Italian, directed by Max Ophuls, with Isa Miranda; no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 8:30: "Vecchia Guardia" (1934), in Italian, directed by Alessandro Blasetti, with Gianfranco Giachetti; no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 2: "Passaporto Rosso" (1935), in Italian, directed by Guido Brignone, with Isa Miranda; no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 6: "Bataille du Rail" (1945), in French, directed by René Clément, foreword by Charles Boyer; English narration and subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at noon: "Ruggles of Red Gap" (1935), directed by Leo McCarey, with Charles Laughton and Mary Boland. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 2:30: "Vecchia Guardia." . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 5: An Italian film, to be announced. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at noon: "Ruggles of Red Gap." . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 2:30: "Squadrone Bianco" (1936), in Italian, directed by Augusto Genina, with Fosco Giachetti; no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 5: "I Vitelloni" (1953), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini; English subtitles. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at noon: A program of films on Matisse. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 2:30: An Italian film, to be announced. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 6: A program of short films by Charles Lyman. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at noon: A program of films on Matisse. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 2:30: "The Battle of Midway" (1943), directed by John Ford; and "The Battle of Britain" (1943), directed by Anthony Veiller, narrated by Walter Huston. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 6: "Kaniapsikan" (1978), directed by James Cabot; "Budworks" (1978), directed by Neal Livingston; and "A Place to Live" (1978), directed by Fred James. . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 2:30: "Squadrone Bianco." . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 6 and 8:30: Two different Italian films, to be announced. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through Nov. 1: A videotape program by Froese, Greenfield, Harvey, and T. R. Uthco. Showings at noon, 2, and 4 (plus 6:15 and 8 on Tuesday evenings). . . . ¶ Starting Nov. 3: "One Way Boogie Woogie" (1977), directed by James Benning. Showings at noon, 1:30, 3, and 4:30. Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Film Forum, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—"The Turbulent 30's: Films of Political Struggle," a program of seven short films. Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:45.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Alex & the Gypsy (1976)—Off the beaten track, but that's just about the only thing you can give it points for. Jack Lemmon is Alex, a cynical, loquacious bailbondsman, whose character is taken from the Stanley Elkin short novel "The Bailbondsman," but the movie involves him with a gypsy (Geneviève Bujold) invented by the screenwriter, Lawrence B. Marcus. Lemmon is always up, and works desperately hard. And so Bujold, who's meant to be the vibrant, tempestuous one, has to fight him for every bit of audience attention, and what should be a love story is a shouting match—ersatz D. H. Lawrence and ersatz Billy Wilder. Directed by John Korty. (Olympia; Oct. 27-31.)

Antonio das Mortes (1970)—Glauber Rocha, a leader of Brazil's *cinema-novo* movement, made this explosive, mystical fantasy-melodrama about a killer hired by a tyrant to crush a peasant revolt. In Portuguese. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Nov. 2.)

Autumn Sonata—With Ingrid Bergman, Liv Ullmann, and Lena Nyman; directed by Ingmar Bergman. In Swedish. (Baronet.)

The Big Fix—A counterculture detective story, with a wisecracking detective—Moses Wine (Richard Dreyfuss)—who isn't the usual cynical down-at-the-heels private eye; he's warm and Jewish and disillusioned, with two sons to support from a failed marriage. The film's nostalgia for the great days of Berkeley in the late sixties—for the sit-ins, the strikes, the antiwar demonstrations—is like a form of intellectual mildew. The film uses "Berkeley" the way Stalinists used "Spain"—to set off waves of guilt and sadness. The plot involves someone's attempt to sabotage the campaign of the liberal candidate for Governor of California by dirty tricks, but the director, Jeremy Paul Kagan, doesn't draw our attention to the vital plot elements or provide enough visual emphasis and clarity for us to see who is chasing whom, or even who is in the scenes. The movie seems to have been photographed through sludge. Dreyfuss acts like a puppy surprising his master with little tricks he's thought of all by himself; you feel he wants petting after each scene. With a remarkable satirical performance by F. Murray Abraham as an Abbie Hoffman-like sloganeering radical, who bounces up and down gleefully, out of sheer kinetic high spirits, and with Susan Anspach, Bonnie Bedelia, John Lithgow, and Rita Karin. From Roger L. Simon's adaptation of his own 1973 novel. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/23/78.) (Beekman, R.K.O. 86th St., and R.K.O. Cinerama 2.)

The Big Sleep—Based on the Raymond Chandler novel, with Robert Mitchum as Philip Marlowe. Directed by Michael Winner. (Olympia; through Oct. 26.)

Black Girl (1969)—Ousmane Sembène's film about a young African girl who goes to work for a European couple in Antibes. In French. (8th St. Playhouse; Oct. 31-Nov. 1.)

Blackmail (1929)—A London-set Hitchcock silent thriller that was in part reshot and in part dubbed to make it a sound film—and an unusually imaginative and innovative one. With its trick shots in the British Museum and a chase on the museum roof, the film seems almost German in its pictorial style, and the heroine is indeed played by the German actress Anny Ondra, who married Max Schmeling. (Her voice is dubbed.) Cyril Ritchard, who didn't look very different half a century later, plays the artist who tries to rape the heroine. Also with Sara Allgood, John Longden, and Donald Calthrop. Hitchcock turns up being pestered by a little boy while he tries to read a book. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Nov. 2.)

The Black Pearl—With Gilbert Roland and Carl Anderson, directed by Saul Swimmer. (Guild.)

Bloodbrothers—The story is of a brawling Italian Catholic family living in Co-op City, in the Bronx, and the actors—Richard Gere as the sensitive, imaginative nineteen-year-old, Tony Lo Bianco as his father, and Paul Sorvino as his uncle—pour on the Mediterranean sensuality and act at their highest pitch. This is an ethnic variant of all those the-summer-the-adolescent-became-a-man pictures, done in a messagey, exploitation manner, like that of "Looking for Mr. Goodbar." The only actor who gets inside his role is Kenneth McMillan in the minor part of Banion, the crippled barkeeper. From Richard Price's novel, adapted by Walter Newman, directed by Robert Mulligan. (10/2/78) (Cinema II.)

The Boys from Brazil—Franklin J. Schaffner's large-scale version of Ira Levin's novel about Nazi experiments in cloning is too logy and literal-minded for suspense, and when an actor like Gregory Peck plays a sadistic Nazi geneticist and speaks in an arch-villain's sibilant German accent, you can't keep from laughing. Peck, in his jungle hideaway, staring into the future as he walks unconcernedly among the mutants he has created, just doesn't have it in him to inspire primitive terror; his effects are all on the surface, and he looks particularly bad because he's playing opposite Laurence Olivier, who is the aged hero, a famous Nazi-hunter (a fictional counterpart of Simon Wiesenthal). Olivier does a flirtatious impersonation of actors like the late Albert Basserman and Felix Bressart, with their querulous, whiny voices and their fussiness—their way of seeming almost helpless yet resourceful, sagacious, and totally *good*. He takes off on this cloying humanistic style just enough to be very funny, and then, in the key sequences, he rises above his Viennese singsongy charm and demonstrates that the harmless-old-bore act of the aged can be a way of saving oneself for the things that count. He's the only reason to see this movie. It starts from the dumb idea that Hitler's closest associates—whom he dragged down with him—would want him cloned. Nazism here is comic-book mythology, a consumer product. With James Mason, Rosemary Harris, Bruno Ganz, Uta Hagen, and Lilli Palmer. (10/9/78) (Ziegfeld.)

Bread and Chocolate—With Nino Manfredi and Anna Karina, directed by Franco Brusati. In Italian. (Little Carnegie.)

The Buddy Holly Story—With Gary Busey in the title role, directed by Steve Rash. (Olympia; starting Nov. 1.)

Caesar and Cleopatra (1946)—Despite its resonant title, Shaw's play is a minor comedy—a slight, sly conceit—and it was blown up out of proportion in this extravagant, Shaw-adoring version directed by Gabriel Pascal. The pomp overpowers the parody and the playfulness. Vivien Leigh romps about as the cruel, deceiving kitten who is to become a passionate, tragic queen, while Claude Rains—as her lover and mentor, the amused, dispassionate Caesar—displays a world-weary wisdom that is more smugly shallow than Shaw could have intended. With a fabulous celebrity-show cast that includes Flora Robson, Stewart Granger, Francis L. Sullivan, Basil Sydney, Michael Rennie, Cecil Parker, Stanley Holloway, Leo Genn, Anthony Harvey, and the invaluable Ernest Thesiger. Music by Georges Auric. (Thalia; Nov. 1-2.)

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Comes a Horseman—With James Caan, Jane Fonda, and Jason Robards; directed by Alan J. Pakula. (Trans-Lux East, 86th St. East, Greenwich, and Criterion; starting Nov. 1.)

Days of Heaven—An eloquent and important film about Americanness and the pangs of exile. Terrence Malick wrote and directed the picture, set in Texas in 1916. There is little or no sense of our being in a country about to enter a world war; we are in an entirely cut-off land of wheat fields that are more brightly lit than the characters' lives. (9/18/78) (Cinema I.)

Death on the Nile—Anthony Shaffer's adaptation of Agatha Christie's 1937 novel has wit and edge and structure—too much structure, as it turns out, for the methodical pacing of the director, John Guillermin. The movie is fatally perfunctory about emotion, atmosphere, suspense. But if the overall effect is disappointing, the details are never less than engaging from moment to moment, and are often knobby and funny. The steamer, full of victims and suspects, has a passenger list that includes Maggie Smith, in a triumphantly mannered performance, as a nurse-companion, and Angela Lansbury, in a superlative caricature, as a wreck of a vamp. Peter Ustinov is an ideal fatuous, vain Hercule Poirot. With Mia Farrow, Bette Davis, I. S. Johar as the Indian manager of the cruise ship, Simon MacCorkindale, Jon Finch, Jack Warden, David Niven, Olivia Hussey, Harry Andrews, and, regrettably, Lois Chiles and George Kennedy. (10/23/78) (34th St. East, Loews Tower East, and Loews State 1.)

The Duellists—An adaptation of Joseph Conrad's Napoleonic-period story "The Duel," about a cavalry officer's sudden flare-up of rage over a trifling, imagined insult by another officer, which grows into a private war. The hussars (Harvey Keitel and Keith Carradine) go on fighting for over fifteen years, and the origin of the quarrel becomes lost in legend, like the causes of the larger wars that they're both fighting in. This English production—a first film by the director Ridley Scott—is consistently entertaining and eerily beautiful. Its special quality is in its Géricault-like compositions; what keep them from palling is that they have a graphic power of their own, and they're coolly impassioned—a story of obsessive enmity is being told by way of these ravishing yet unsettling images. The mixed American and British cast includes Cristina Raines, Albert Finney, Alan Webb, Edward Fox, Diana Quick, Jenny Runacre, Robert Stephens, Tom Conti, and Meg Wynn Owen. (1/23/78) (Cinema Village; Oct. 29-30.)

Effi Briest (1974)—The best and most elegant of all the films by the young West German prodigy Rainer Werner Fassbinder. Set in a small German town stamped with the Prussian determination of the Bismarck period. Effi is played by Hanna Schygulla, a member of Fassbinder's phenomenal acting troupe. Here she plays a girl of seventeen who is married off to a baron with a face like a knife edge (Wolfgang Schenck). After Effi has been his wife for a while, the general agreement is that he would have done better to have married her mother, whom he courted "twenty years ago." Not much of a start for a teen-ager. Fassbinder has an interesting attitude toward Effi, whose beauty and vivacity he communicates, but he also knows that she is ambitious in puny ways that run along the tracks of Prussian convention. His device of using a staring, distant camera to photograph scenes and then making them discrete by using title cards that bleach to white is like a hand of benediction on the story. In German. (6/27/77) (8th St. Playhouse; Oct. 29-30.)

Une Femme Douce (1969)—Robert Bresson's modern-Paris transcription of Dostoevski's "A Gentle Creature"—his first time in color, though it turns into black-and-white in your head afterward. The teen-age heroine, a mysteriously ominous mixture of the docile and the stubborn, marries a stuffy pawnbroker. The film begins with the last act—with her suicide. What follows is a narrative of their life together. This is one of his big films. Like "Un Condamné à Mort S'Est Echappé," "Pickpocket," "Le Journal d'un Curé de Campagne," and all his others, it is really about confinement and flight—an account of a character pledged to escape. In French. (8th St. Playhouse; Oct. 29-30.)

F.I.S.T.—A long-winded film set between the thirties and the fifties, directed by Norman Jewison, about a fictional union called the Federation of Interstate Truckers, presumably based on the Teamsters. The man who rises to its head, called Johnny Kovak, is played by Sylvester Stallone, a sleepy presence with moments of primitive intensity. Johnny Kovak's corruption grows with his power, and he is eventually brought to trial by Rod Steiger, as a senator. There is a charming performance by Elena Karam as Johnny's Lithuanian mother-in-law-to-be. We should be grateful, heaven knows, for any Hollywood film that takes us into the public domain, but this one seems unwittingly right-wing. (5/8/78) (St. Marks Cinema; through Oct. 31.)

Flamingo Road (1949)—Joan Crawford's heroines have a few too many ups and downs. This time, she's involved with Zachary Scott, the same heel who betrayed her in "Mildred Pierce," and she's implicated in murder again, and with the same director, Michael Curtiz, but the script lacks the mythic overwrought James M. Cainisms of the earlier film. It's merely tediously overwrought. With Sydney Greenstreet, Gladys George, David Brian, Gertrude Michael, and Fred Clark. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 2.)

For Me and My Gal (1942)—Fresh from his Broadway success in "Pal Joey," Gene Kelly made his movie début here as a good-bad guy, playing opposite Judy Garland. They are a vaudeville team who are just getting their big break when Kelly is inducted (the period is the First World War); he deliberately injures his hand so he won't have to fight and—the movie having been made during the Second World War—he must then reform and become a hero. The story is naïvely patriotic and sentimental, but Kelly is amazingly fresh; his grin could melt stone, and he and Garland are a magical pair. A good score, and some neat comedy routines featuring Kelly and Ben Blue. Busby Berkeley directed; with George Murphy and Marta Eggerth. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 1.)

Foul Play—With Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase, directed by Colin Higgins. (D. W. Griffith, Loews 83rd Quad, and Forum.)

Le Gai Savoir (1968)—"Weekend" was the culmination of Godard's great, innovative, rampaging career, and after it he seemed to be back at Square One, trying to found a new Maoist political cinema. This was the first of his monotonous, didactic experiments, and it's just about impossible to sit through. Juliet Berto (as the daughter of Lumumba) and Jean-Pierre Léaud (as Rousseau's great-great-grandson) begin on a course of study; there's not much to look at, and since the sound track is full of bleeps to cover the

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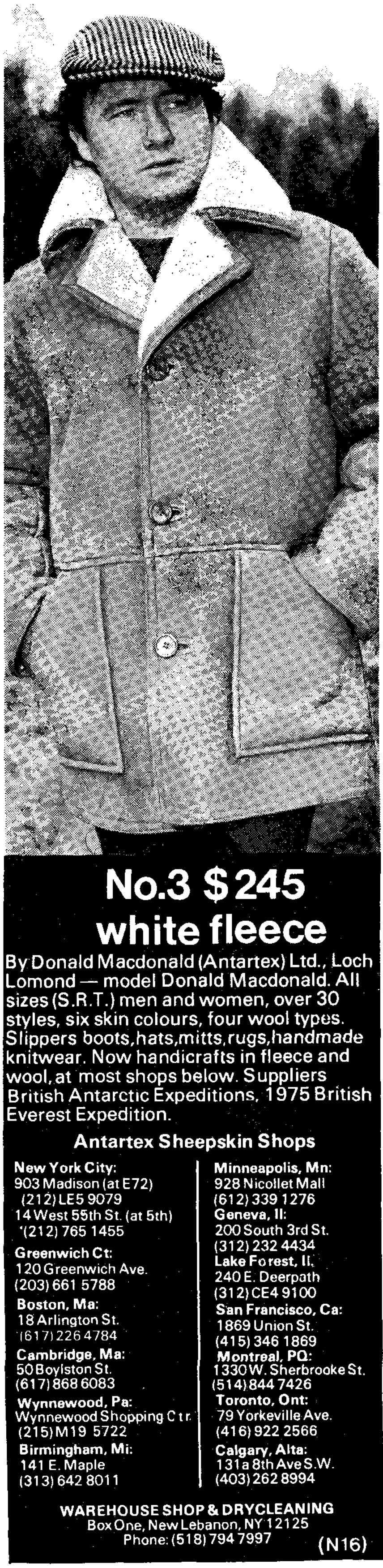

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obscenities, there's nothing to do but read the subtitles as the two of them talk. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Nov. 1.)

Girl Friends—Directed by Claudia Weill, from a screenplay by Vicki Polon. About a friendship between a Jewish photographer (Melanie Mayron) and a blond Gentile (Anita Skinner) who gets married, precipitating jealousy. The subject is interesting, but the way the picture is made is rather importunate. (8/21/78) (Art. . . ¶ 72nd Street East; starting Oct. 27.)

Goin' South—With Jack Nicholson and Mary Steenburgen, directed by Nicholson. (Coronet.)

Grease—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in an evocation of the fifties at high school. The movie runs on pure ozone, good times, and an easy homesickness for a past decade that the people who lived through it will not find particularly missable. (6/26/78) (Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy.)

Green Dolphin Street (1947)—The acting in this stupefyingly flimsy epic is so execrable that the actors seem to be in competition for booby prizes. Richard Hart is the New Zealander who gets stewed and doesn't remember whether the girl on an island off the Newfoundland coast was named Marianne or Marguerite. He writes to Marianne (Lana Turner), proposing marriage, although it was her sister, Marguerite (Donna Reed), he wanted; when Marianne arrives he marries her, and Marguerite, naturally upset, goes to a nunnery. The married couple raise sheep, reproduce, go through a fierce earthquake, and almost get killed when the Maoris go on an anti-Caucasian rampage; fortunately the couple have an influential pal (Van Heflin) who sees to it that the aborigines keep their distance. Adapted from a piece of unleavened dough kneaded into a best-selling novel by Elizabeth Goudge, and directed by Victor Saville. (Regency; Oct. 31-Nov. 1.)

Handle with Care (1977)—Underadvertised, this high-spirited small picture has the fully rounded script (by Paul Brickman) and the consistent vision of a classic American comedy. It's about a group of people in a Southwestern town whose CB radios allow them to release their inhibitions; the story deals with the collision of their free-floating ids. As the Samaritan hero—a small-town Boy Scout who never grew up—Paul Le Mat has some of the James Dean-Beau Bridges sensitivity. As a trucker's wife who's as tough as they come, Marcia Rodd has timing comparable to Lily Tomlin's in "The Late Show;" her scenes with Ann Wedgeworth, as a bedraggled passionflower who, it turns out, is married to the same trucker, are the best comic teamwork in recent movies. Jonathan Demme directed, in a soft, subdued style—it's a little mild, maybe, but very pleasant. Released in some areas under the title "Citizens Band." (10/24/77) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Oct. 30.)

Heaven Can Wait—We all can wait for something better, in spite of the acting contributions of Warren Beatty, as a dead football player intent on being reincarnated; of Julie Christie, as a gutsy English girl in love with him; of James Mason, as a heavenly guardian angel; and—most startling of all—in spite of a script by the tremendously intelligent Elaine May, in collaboration with Warren Beatty. (7/10/78) (Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Greenwich; through Oct. 31.)

Hospital (1970)—Fred Wiseman's documentary on life in a metropolitan center hospital. (Little Theatre; Nov. 1.)

The Idiot (1951)—Kurosawa made this version of the Dostoevski novel right after "Rashomon," using the same two men—Masayuki Mori (the husband in "Rashomon") as Prince Myshkin, and Toshiro Mifune (the bandit in "Rashomon") as Rogozhin. It's a long, uneven, fascinating film, with such curiosities as a Nastasya Filipovna (Setsuko Hara) modelled on Maria Casarès in Cocteau's "Orpheus." In Japanese. (8th St. Playhouse; Oct. 31-Nov. 1.)

Interiors—A giant stride made by Woody Allen, who has written and directed a magnificent study of a family in the midst of change. Nearly all the members of the family are afflicted by the pressures of a society that puts a premium on "self-expression." With Geraldine Page, E. G. Marshall, Maureen Stapleton, Diane Keaton, Marybeth Hurt. (8/7/78) (Trans-Lux 85th St., Quad Cinema, Festival, and New Yorker.)

Juvenile Court (1973)—Each time Fred Wiseman examines an institution, he seems to uncover a whole new world, and in each of these worlds he finds people—those in authority and those caught in the wheels of authority—struggling with perversely funny, insurmountable, tragic everyday problems. This two-and-a-half-hour film was made in the Memphis Juvenile Court. The characters include an eleven-year-old prostitute; a boy babysitter charged with assaulting the child in his care; the child's mother, who is obsessed with what seems to have been a minor feeling-up incident; a teen-age girl who slashes her wrist and says her stepfather made advances to her; and an intelligent judge trying to serve justice in impossible situations. Watching the film is like seeing the underbelly of TV soap operas; the faces cut against clichés the way the faces in the televised Watergate hearings did. When the children plead for themselves, their voices have a familiar terror. It's the same sound that middle-class children make when they claim their parents have been unjust to them, but here, whether the prisoners are innocent or guilty of the specific charge, the injustice seems cosmic. They're trapped by everything. Wiseman's open-eyed approach to the stories of their lives is perhaps motivated less by reforming zeal than by his own sense of the mystery of those lives. (Little Theatre; Nov. 2.)

Law and Order (1969)—Fred Wiseman's documentary on the working lives of the police in a large American city. (Little Theatre; Oct. 31.)

Macunaima (1972)—A satirical fairy-tale extravaganza from Brazil, directed by Joaquim Pedro de Andrade. In Portuguese. (Little Theatre; through Oct. 29.)

The Magic Flute (1975)—Ingmar Bergman said that making this film "was the best time of my life: you can't imagine what it is like to have Mozart's music in the studio every day." Actually, watching the movie, one can. He has treated Mozart's peerlessly silly masterpiece with elegance and supreme affection. He emphasizes the theatricality of the piece, using space as stage space but with the camera coming in close. We get the pixilated feeling that we're near enough to touch the person who is singing; we might be dreamers sailing invisibly among the guests at a cloud-borne party. It's blissful. The English translation of Bergman's adaptation of the text has considerable grace, and the story comes across even more directly than when you hear the opera sung in English. In Swedish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Oct. 29.)

The Man Who Loved Women (1977)—The dedicated skirt-chaser of Truffaut's film is meant to be irresistibly charming, but his compulsion looks to be about as exciting as building a two-foot replica of the Pentagon with toothpicks. In its gross flippancy, this film resembles Truffaut's "Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me"—it may be even worse, because of the mixture of evasiveness and obviousness. With Charles Denner, Nelly Borgeaud, Brigitte Fossey, and Leslie Caron. In French. (12/5/77) (Quad Cinema.)

The Marrying Kind (1952)—In the early fifties, Hollywood wasn't making very many movies about the troubled lives of average couples, and so some people took this uneven, serious sit-com, directed by George Cukor from a script by Ruth Gordon and Garson Kanin, to be highly commendable. As the couple whose marriage is breaking up, Judy Holliday (of the friendly brass lungs) and Aldo Ray (with his lightweight cracked-gravel croak) have a surprising salt-and-pepper rapport. But there's nothing to this movie except the expertly contrived misunderstandings of simple "little people." It's warm; at times it's likable. But does anybody believe a minute of it? With Madge Kennedy as a judge, and Peggy Cass and Phyllis Povah. (Thalia; Oct. 27-28.)

Masculine Feminine (1965)—Jean-Luc Godard's graceful, intuitive examination of the courtship rites of "the children of Marx and Coca-Cola." With Jean-Pierre Léaud as a young radical in love with Chantal Goya, a *yé-yé* singer. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Nov. 1.)

Midnight Express—With Brad Davis, Randy Quaid, John Hurt, and Mike Kellin; directed

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

by Alan Parker. (Gemini 1, Gemini 2, and Loews State 2.)

Mildred Pierce (1945)—Joan Crawford rises from poverty to affluence and then suffers glamorously in beach house, roadhouse, and mansion from the nasty semi-incestuous goings on of her cad husband (Zachary Scott) and her spoiled daughter (Ann Blyth). Miss Crawford's heavy breathing was certified as acting when she won an Academy Award for her performance here. Michael Curtiz directed this glossy adaptation of the James M. Cain novel. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 2.)

The Mystery of the Wax Museum (1933)—Entertaining, grisly chiller, directed by Michael Curtiz and shot in an early Technicolor process, with the color contributing heavily to the general creepiness. Lionel Atwill is the murderous curator who pours hot wax over his manacled, still-living victims and then exhibits them as sculpture. With Glenda Farrell, Fay Wray, Gavin Gordon, Frank McHugh, Edwin Maxwell, and Arthur Edmund Carewe. From a play by Charles S. Belden. (Remade in 1953 in 3-D as "House of Wax," and probably the source of the 1959 "A Bucket of Blood.") (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 27-28.)

National Lampoon's Animal House—A beery piece that has its amiably funny flashes about the American college system, but more often consists of what is called undergraduate humor. Directed by John Landis. (8/14/78) (Eastside Cinema, U.A. East, Waverly, Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy 1.)

New York, New York (1977)—A piece of cheek, pilfering the title of a famous Bernstein-Comden-Green song. It begins on V-J Day; Liza Minnelli is a struggling singer, Robert De Niro is a struggling saxophonist, both parts written so as to represent the Hollywood chestnut that ruthlessness is necessary for success. The best thing about this movie is De Niro's firm, swift performance. Directed by Martin Scorsese, who made the fine "Mean Streets." (7/4/77) (Bleecker St. Cinema; Oct. 28.)

Nosferatu (1922)—F. W. Murnau's famous vampire movie—part of everyone's moviegoing subconscious of bite tactics. Wonderfully photographed: Murnau gave distinction to dross. (Cinema Village; Oct. 31.)

No Time for Breakfast—With Annie Girardot, Jean-Pierre Cassel, François Périer, and Isabelle Huppert; directed by Jean-Louis Bertucelli. In French. (68th St. Playhouse, and Quad Cinema.)

Perceval—Directed by Eric Rohmer. In French. (Cinema Studio.)

Pygmalion (1938)—First-rate romantic comedy, and certainly the best G. B. S. picture ever done. Wendy Hiller made her triumphant film début as Eliza, and Leslie Howard is in great form as that fatuous snob Higgins. With Wilfrid Lawson as Doolittle, and Marie Lohr as Mrs. Higgins. Shaw supervised, Gabriel Pascal produced, Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard directed, David Lean edited, Arthur Honegger did the score, and Harry Stradling shot it. (Thalia; Nov. 1-2.)

Revenge of the Pink Panther—Peter Sellers once again as the expert in *gaffes*, Inspector Clouseau, whose armored ineptitude periodically drives Herbert Lom, as his boss, into mental institutions. Story by Blake Edwards, and directed by him. (7/31/78) (Playboy; starting Oct. 27.)

Second Fiddle (1939)—Mary Healy steals the picture clean away when she sings "I'm Sorry for Myself." Then we're left with Sonja Henie skating and pouting and making pretty little faces to show that she's thinking. It's a padded little nothing about Hollywood life and publicity trickery, but the cast (Tyrone Power, Edna May Oliver, and Rudy Vallée) and the Irving Berlin songs keep it from being as lethally offensive as the Sonja Henie-John Payne movies. Sidney Lanfield directed, in his routine, straightforward manner. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 30.)

Sex with a Smile—With Marty Feldman, directed by Sergio Martino. (86th St. East; through Oct. 26.)

A Slave of Love—A new Russian classic, made by Nikita Mikhalkov. Set in the Crimea just after the October Revolution, with White Russians still holding out in the south, it tells a story worthy of Chekhov in its simplicity and idiosyncrasy of detail. A preposterously melodramatic film-within-the-film is being made. The woman star is Olga (Yelena Solovei). She longs for a cause almost as if she were yearning for a trip to Moscow; the cause is all around her, but she cannot see it. The film is a most beautiful and fragile story about people out of step with their era. In Russian. (8/28/78) (Gramercy, and Quad Cinema.)

Somebody Killed Her Husband—A romantic suspense comedy that resembles the pictures that Ginger Rogers did in the late thirties—the ones about ordinary, pleasant people falling in love and getting into farfetched scrapes. But when this dishy blonde (Farrah Fawcett-Majors, in her first movie as a star) walks through the toy department of Macy's with her toddler son in a stroller and spills a bag of pretzels, and a clerk (Jeff Bridges) rushes to her assistance and looks into her teeth and it's love at first sight, everything seems a little custardy and congealed. Did the screenwriter, Reginald Rose, pull the script out of a filing cabinet where it had rested for decades? Bridges probably does better by the dated romantic badinage than anybody else could have, and he makes the movie semi-watchable. John Glover's pinched-faced, amused craziness is also entertaining, and John Wood and Tammy Grimes try for a stylish, arch ghoulishness, but they don't have the witty lines that are needed to support that style. Directed by Lamont Johnson. (10/9/78) (Olympia; starting Nov. 1.)

Think Dirty—With Marty Feldman, Shelley Berman, and Judy Cornwell. (86th St. East; through Oct. 26.)

Tommy (1975)—The famous rock opera composed and sung by The Who, turned into a clamorous film by Ken Russell. Like many other mindless satires, it fallaciously respects and exploits what it seeks to criticize. For instance, it pretends to be severe about the false idols of our era, but it is exceedingly religious about show biz and success. Lots of psychedelic shocks and comic-strip effects. Ann-Margret is appealing when she doesn't have to fling herself about. Roger Daltrey plays Tommy. (R.K.O. 86th St.; through Oct. 26. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux East, and Criterion; through Oct. 31.)

Touch of Evil (1958)—The original 108-minute version, not often exhibited, of Orson Welles' marvellously garish thriller about drugs and police corruption in a border town. Welles, padded and false-nosed, plays a bloodhound detective. The cast, assembled as perversely as in a nightmare, includes Marlene Dietrich as the madam of a Mexican bordello, Charlton Heston, Joseph Calleia, Akim Tamiroff, Joseph Cotten, Janet Leigh, Zsa Zsa Gabor, and Mercedes McCambridge. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Oct. 30.)

The Twelve Chairs (1970)—Mel Brooks shows his affection for the innocent nuttiness of earlier periods of comedy in this story about three men (Frank Langella, Dom DeLuise, Ron Moody) searching for a fortune hidden in a chair, but the whole enterprise is rather forlorn. Not bad, really—just so-so. (Cinema Village; Oct. 27-28.)

An Unmarried Woman—Paul Mazursky wrote and directed this buoyant, enormously friendly comedy about Erica (Jill Clayburgh) and her attempt to get back into "the stream of life" after her marriage of sixteen years breaks up. It's a tenderhearted feminist picture. With Michael Murphy, Lisa Lucas, Pat Quinn, Kelly Bishop, Linda Miller, Cliff Gorman, Mazursky himself, as Hal, and Alan Bates, whose fine comic, expansive performance as Saul Kaplan, a famous painter, overpowers the movie. (3/6/78) (Playboy; through Oct. 26. . . . ¶ Olympia; Oct. 27-31.)

Up in Smoke—You don't have to be an insider to see the humor in a doper's single-minded, never-ending quest for great grass. This piece of stoned-hippie foolishness, starring the comedy team Cheech and Chong, who wrote the script, is fairly consistently funny. It's an exploitation slapstick comedy, rather than a family picture, such as "Blazing Saddles" or "High Anxiety"—which means that it's dirtier, wilder, and sillier. (It's also better paced.) With Zane Buzby as the speed freak, and June Fairchild as the woman who snorts Ajax. Directed by Lou Adler. (10/9/78) (Bay Cinema, Loews Ciné, and R.K.O. Cinerama 1.)

Violette—With Isabelle Huppert, Stéphane Audran, and Jean Carmet; directed by Claude Chabrol. In French. (Paris.)

Wagonmaster (1950)—Mormons in the eight-

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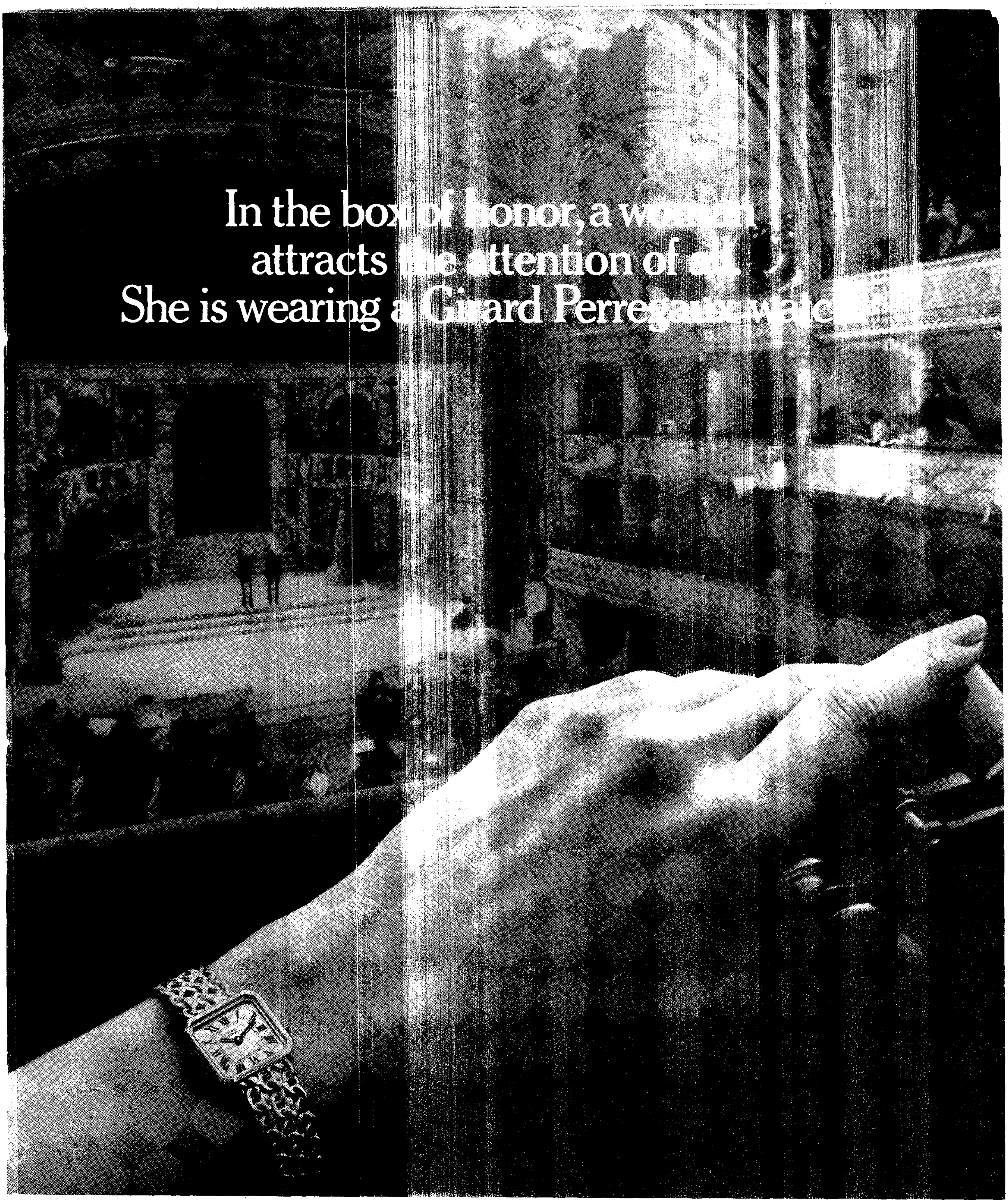
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een-seventies in search of new land to settle; the film is about what happens to their wagon train, and the director, John Ford, is as deeply involved in the characters as he is in the encounters with Indians, the romances, the dealings with mysterious strangers. He draws heavily on his earlier films; as a result, this seems one of his most personal works. It's a John Ford ballad, with his limitations showing as well as his poetic strength. With Ben Johnson, Joanne Dru, Harry Carey, Jr., Ward Bond, and Jane Darwell. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Oct. 30.)

Way Down East (1920)—The plot is Victorian, but the treatment is inspired. D. W. Griffith took a creaking, dated stage melodrama and turned it into a melodramatic epic. Lillian Gish is the girl betrayed by Lowell Sherman and eventually rescued from an icy river by Richard Barthelmess. Audiences giggle at bits here and there, but not at the sequence in which she refuses to part from her dead baby. Griffith stole from Thomas Hardy, but he stole beautifully. One of Griffith's greatest box-office successes, and a film that influenced several Russian epics. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Nov. 1.)

A Wedding—Robert Altman's satirical farce takes place during a single day, starting with a family-only Episcopal-church wedding and then moving from the church to the reception at the groom's family mansion, in a North Shore suburb of Chicago. The forty-eight members of the cast (especially Carol Burnett, Pat McCormick, and Amy Stryker) do many charming things, but the flimsy movie is bitter in a concealed, dry, facile way. (10/2/78) (Sutton, Cinema 3, and Paramount.)

Who Is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe?—With George Segal, Jacqueline Bisset, and Robert Morley; directed by Ted Kotcheff. (Embassy 72nd St.)

Who'll Stop the Rain—An interesting film by the Czech-born director Karel Reisz, made from a novel called "Dog Soldiers," by Robert Stone. The original book is full of clichés about the social ills that followed Vietnam; the film is thoughtful about the impact of stimulants and soporifics and random noise on a culture. With Nick Nolte, Tuesday Weld, and Michael Moriarty. (9/4/78) (72nd Street East, and Olympia; through Oct. 26. . . . ¶ St. Marks Cinema; through Oct. 31.)

The Wiz—Based on the Broadway musical, with Diana Ross as Dorothy, Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow, Nipsey Russell as the Tinman, Ted Ross as the Lion, Lena Horne as Glinda the Good Witch, and Richard Pryor as the Wiz. Directed by Sidney Lumet. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Murray Hill, Plaza, Loews Orpheum, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Words and Music (1948)—Disastrous double bio of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, with Tom Drake and Mickey Rooney insanely miscast in the roles. The story part is painfully embarrassing to watch, but some of the musical numbers aren't bad. The huge cast includes Judy Garland, Cyd Charisse, Perry Como, Janet Leigh, Gower Champion, Gene Kelly (who choreographed the "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" ballet that he dances with Vera-Ellen), and June Allyson (whose "Thou Swell," with the Blackburn Twins, is a bright spot in her career). Norman Taurog directed. (Regency; starting Nov. 2.)

Ziegfeld Follies (1946)—Vincente Minnelli directs an extraordinary cast in this (plotless) M-G-M musical revue that features a peculiar Hollywood-forties style of décor (chorus boys with jewelled antler-shaped branches, chorus girls clad in vermillion, and so on). Fred Astaire dances "Limehouse Blues" on a set left over from "The Picture of Dorian Gray;" he and Gene Kelly do a routine together ("The Babbitt and the Bromide," by George and Ira Gershwin); and Judy Garland appears at her most lighthearted in the dance-and-patter number—"A Great Lady Has an Interview." The other performers include Lena Horne, Fanny Brice, Victor Moore, Red Skelton, Esther Williams, and Keenan Wynn. The fastidious are advised to head for the lobby while Kathryn Grayson sings "There's Beauty Everywhere" against magenta foam skies. (Regency; starting Nov. 2.)

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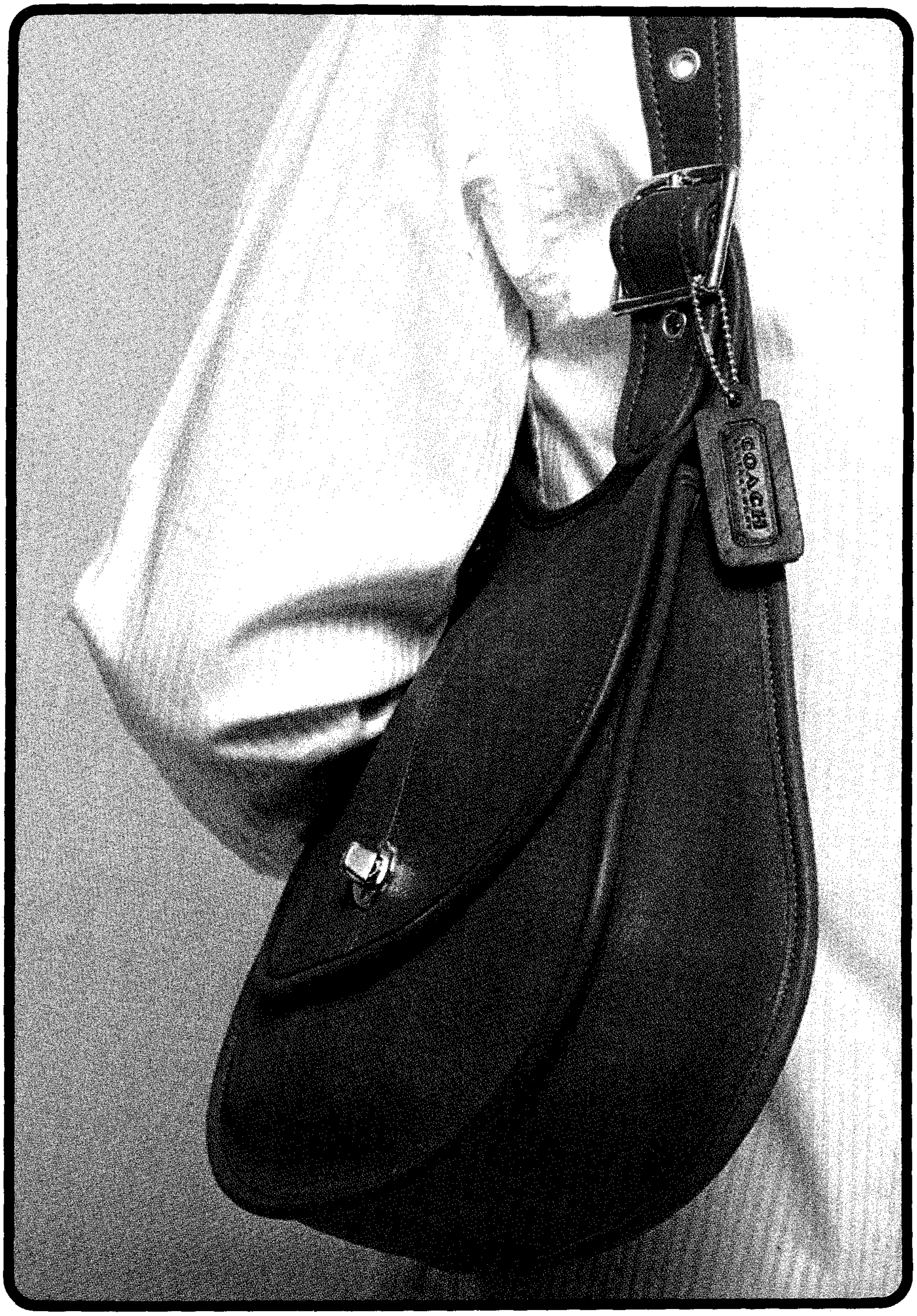

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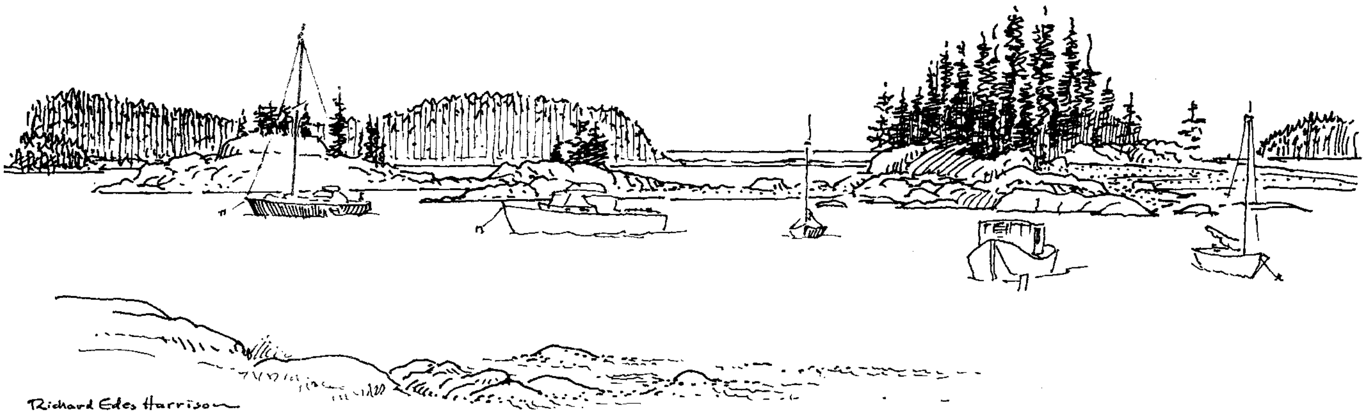
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

SINCE the fall of Saigon to the North Vietnamese, observers of the American political scene have expended a good deal of effort on figuring out what the "lessons of Vietnam" might be. One school of thought straightforwardly holds that our failure in that part of the world should teach us to be wary of similar interventions elsewhere and so avoid "another Vietnam." A second school holds, more elaborately, that this rudimentary lesson has in fact already been overlearned, and that what now needs learning is that intervention is sometimes necessary. The foreign policy of the United States, adherents of this school say, is imperilled not by belligerency and over-extension but by pacifism and "loss of nerve," which in the opinion of the most extreme analysts portend nothing less than the Decline of the West. There is at least one good reason for finding this line of thinking plausible: history rarely comes up with "another" anything. It seems to be in the nature of the lesson-learning approach in general to expect repetition, but actual events regularly defeat this expectation by their endless flow of novelty. The loss-of-nerve theorists, borrowing a point from the old arguments against the Vietnam War, argue that, just as the war itself was not "another Munich," which was what many veterans of the fight against Hitler supposed it to be, so the revolution in Angola—or in Country X, Y, or Z that might seem to be threatened by Soviet intervention—should not automatically be considered "another Vietnam." The point would carry more weight if, after disposing of the "another Vietnam" argument, the loss-of-nerve theorists were not in the habit of falling right back, in their analysis of whatever crisis is at hand, on the old Munich analogy, with its assumption that any setback that is unopposed will probably be the start of a long slide to complete ruin.

Fortunately, the whole argument has remained essentially academic, since events in the last few years have not offered the United States much in the way of opportunities for large-scale intervention. The recent disputes over Africa, for example, seemed to be mostly about how tough the government's rhetoric should get; few actual measures were discussed. There is, however, a country other than our own in which the painful experience of the United States in Vietnam could be studied with great practical profit. The leaders of the Soviet Union, presumably with the hope of some advantage to themselves, have been tempted of late, it seems, to involve their country and its ally Cuba in the post-colonial struggles that are currently taking place on the African continent. But Chairman Brezhnev and his advisers would do well to ponder the example of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. They should carefully weigh how much the United States put into Vietnam against how much it benefitted from that involvement. Then they might want to get out some old speeches by Senator Fulbright, and other members of the opposition to the Vietnam War, on the limitations of military power in distant parts of the world and on the importance of local political forces. If they were to do this again, the wisdom that our country won so slowly and at such high cost but that seems to be of so little use to us just at the moment would at any rate be of use to someone. The first lesson the Russians might learn is: *In our present-day world, peoples are taking over their own countries.* During the postwar period, the most extensive changes of the political map have been brought about not by attempts of either the United States or the Soviet Union to undermine the influence of the other but by the efforts of local people to rid themselves first of European colonial rule and then of subordination to Russian or American influence. The process has been one of liberation, but there is no need to get sentimental about it. What may well be the two worst regimes in the world—the one in Cambodia and the one in Uganda—are among the newly independent nations, now collectively referred to as the Third



World. This first lesson, then, can be extended to: *People seem to prefer almost any native regime, no matter how monstrous, to foreign domination.* They want the right to tyrannize over themselves. Far-flung imperial rule seems to be a political form that, like hereditary aristocratic rule, has somehow become untenable in our world. (The closest thing to it that we have is the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, but in this instance it is geographical proximity that makes the rule of other countries by main force still possible.) The second lesson is an addendum to the first: *Nations that have just thrown out one foreign ruler are not likely to invite in a second.* Several African leaders have made the point explicitly to the Russians, but that should have been unnecessary: the Russians should have deduced it years ago from their experience in such countries as Egypt and, above all, China, in both of which they were first welcomed as friends in the fight against imperialism and then expelled for being imperialists of a new kind.

As for Vietnam itself, it is following a course unforeseen and unwished for by geopolitical theorists in Moscow, Washington, or Peking: it is quarrelling bitterly with China, making war against Cambodia, and accepting Soviet aid while courting favor and aid from the United States. This display of obstreperousness, defiance, and independence only confirms what the war demonstrated: that, for better or worse (and sometimes it does seem to be for worse), the small countries of the world are taking their futures into their own hands. Each one, at least within its own borders, has become a great power.

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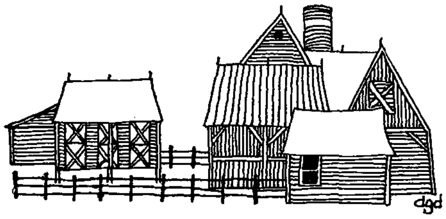
Paper

WE'VE just received a report from a Yankees fan:

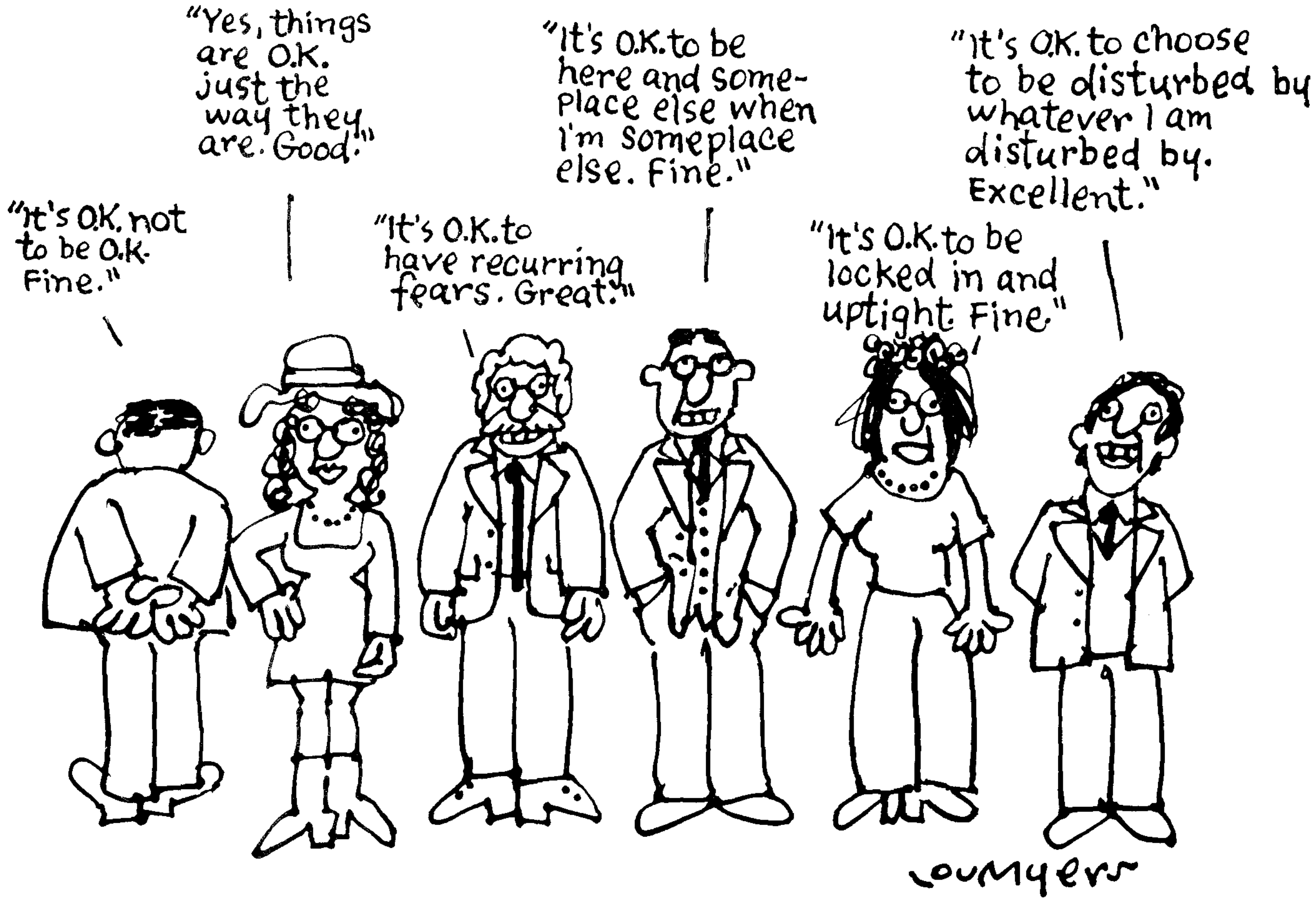
At lunchtime on Thursday, I realized that I had never, except in newsreels, seen a ticker-tape parade, so I took the I.R.T. downtown to watch the Yankees ride in triumph up Broadway. As it turned out, there wasn't a lot of authentic ticker tape to see—Wall Street has become so computerized that there's not much call for it anymore—but when I came up from the subway the sky was already awash in every other kind of paper imaginable: streamers, confetti, Kleenex, adding-machine rolls, envelopes, torn-up file folders, letterheads, shredded printouts, I.B.M. punch cards, pages from the telephone book, even some newsprint. And, miraculously, most of this paper was falling *upward*. It was as if for one joyous afternoon the law of gravity had been suspended and there was no reason for anything to come down until it was tired. A wad of invoices tossed out of the Woolworth Building, say, might swirl up and over Broadway, then swoop down and circle the spire of Trinity Church before bearing back uptown and floating gently to rest alongside the Merrill Lynch offices. At one point, I saw a man vigorously dump a big plastic trash bag full of foillike scraps out of a window high up on the west side of Broadway. All together, in a heap, the scraps dipped, hesitated, and then shot up straight past the man's head. After watching for a moment, he flung the bag out, too.

Then, a little after noon, came the Yankees. Or, rather, then came some police, a small marching band, a couple of truckloads of what seemed to be reporters and TV people, and two flatbed trucks loaded with smiling, waving men and women—the Yankees, their wives, team executives and employees. From where I was standing, way back in the crowd, I couldn't really recognize any of the players. Jumping up and down, I think I spotted Lou's chin, and I may have glimpsed the back of Reggie's head, but I can't be sure. I knew it was the Yankees, though, from the cheers, which were rising now just like the paper—a bright, exultant sound that seemed to sweep all the way up Broadway and echo back and forth. After the Yankees came the Sanitation Department—four tank trucks, which sprayed everything in their path off into the gutter, and a phalanx of street-sweeping machines, which churned it all into papier-mâché. And then we came—the fans—whooping and cheering and shoving our way to City Hall. This part was scary. There were so many people surging into the street that it was sometimes impossible to move at all, and near the corner of Broadway and Wall Street I saw a street light tilting precariously and a car whose roof had been crushed by people scrambling up on it. (I never made it to City Hall, but I heard later that the crowd there was so large and boisterous that the ceremonies honoring the team had to be curtailed.) Yet all the confusion was exhilarating, too, with everyone laughing and shouting and smiling, and I remembered something I heard once in my high-school Latin class: that in ancient Rome when a general was carried in triumph from the Campus Martius to the Capitol his soldiers would bring up the rear of the otherwise solemn procession in broken ranks, laughing, joking, singing, even jeering at their general. They believed that by keeping the proceedings from being altogether orderly they might ward off bad luck. A little happy disorder seemed like a lucky thing to me, too, and on the way back down Broadway I scooped up from the sidewalk a clump of streamers and mashed computer cards to take home. It's right here on my desk, looking a little untidy, perhaps (actually, it closely resembles a bird's nest), but still buoyant; any moment now it's going to leap up in the air again, and so am I.



Rehearsal

LAST week, we hung around a bit with George Abbott, the actor-writer-producer-director, during a rehearsal of "Winning Isn't Everything," which was written by Lee Kalcheim, was being directed by Mr. Abbott, was being produced by the Hudson Guild Theatre, and is scheduled to open on November 8th. The play is No. 119 in a long line of shows that Mr. Abbott has been involved in: a line that started in 1913, with "The Misleading Lady," and has included, among others, "Three Men on a Horse," "On Your Toes," "The Boys from Syracuse," "Best Foot Forward," "The Pajama Game," "Damn Yankees," and "New Girl in Town" (all of which he directed and either wrote or helped to write), as well as, among others, "Boy Meets Girl," "Brother Rat," "Room Service," "Pal Joey," "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "Call Me Madam," "Wonderful Town," "Never Too Late," and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" (all of which he also directed). Because many people, not including Mr. Abbott, make a fuss about his age, we might as well mention that he was born, in Forestville, New York, on June 25, 1887. We met Mr. Abbott last week, at his suggestion, in front of his hotel, in the Fifties just west of Fifth Avenue, at nine o'clock in the morning of what turned out to be the


"It's O.K. not to be O.K. Fine."
"Yes, things are O.K. just the way they are. Good."
"It's O.K. to have recurring fears. Great."
"It's O.K. to be here and someplace else when I'm someplace else. Fine."
"It's O.K. to be locked in and uptight. Fine."
"It's O.K. to choose to be disturbed by whatever I am disturbed by. Excellent."
Lou Myers

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first really cold day of the new fall. We were about a minute late, and found him standing and waiting—six feet one and three-quarters, with the posture of a West Point cadet. He was wearing, against the cold day, only a small, rakish-looking beige English cap, a bright-yellow turtleneck shirt, a Brooks Brothers tweed suit, brown socks, and brown loafers. He greeted us with a friendly grin, but he was clearly impatient to get moving.

"I hope you like to walk," he said, briskly starting off westward, with long strides. "The theatre is on West Twenty-sixth. In Chelsea. Sometimes I walk all the way. Other times, I walk part of the way and then jump on a bus. Our rehearsal starts at ten and goes to three. I don't like to be late. Maybe this morning we'll just nab a taxi." At the Ninth Avenue intersection, he grabbed us by the arm, saving us from being run over by a delivery cart, and firmly guided us through some heavy traffic. It was rush hour, and taxis seemed unavailable. Suddenly, though, he whistled through his teeth, pointed a commanding finger at a taxi with its "Taxi" light on, and nabbed it.

"The theatre is between Ninth and Tenth," he told us as the taxi headed south. "We're not only Off Broadway but *Off* Off. It's a little theatre. The theatre is so small, in fact, that we can't have all the critics come at once. We have to spread them out over three performances. The play is a farce, and it needs an audience reacting, along with the critics. The theatre is little, but it does such good things. 'Da' opened down there, and now it's a hit on Broadway. The place is run by a young man named Craig Anderson. Very smart. He's going to be a power in the theatre."

"How old is he?" we asked.

"Gosh, thirty, I guess," Mr. Abbott said. "He runs a terrific organization. It's quite a complex down there. The theatre is only part of many things that the Hudson Guild does. Child care. Classes in this and classes in that. You can see that it's all an influence for good. It's very exciting down there. It's all very much the heart of New York." Mr. Abbott gave us his grin again, and looked us straight in the eye. "Do you like New York?" he asked us.

"Love it," we said.

"Same here," Mr. Abbott said, still fixing us with a keen gaze, and, inescapably, making us notice that the color of his eyes was deep blue. "Technically, my home now is in Miami Beach. I decided to award myself Florida temperature for the rest of my life. But I don't *stay* there. I come here in the spring and in the fall and live in the hotel. I spend my summers in the Catskills, about a hundred miles from New York, at the Merriewold Club, where I play a lot of golf, but I keep driving my car back and forth between there and here."

"When did you last direct a show here, before this one?" we asked.

"Two years ago," Mr. Abbott said. "It was called 'Music Is,' and it was a failure. It got good reviews out of town, but when we brought it to New York it got panned. I can generally see what's wrong with my failures, but this one was a disappointment. I thought the costumes were good, and *they* got panned. It's easy to have a blind spot, but after that failure I was unhappy about the theatre. So I started reading novels. I read a ton of novels, and I began to get a feeling for the novel, so I wrote one. It's called 'Try-Out.' It's being published in the spring, by Playboy Press. Well, here you are. In Chelsea. You can see how good-looking this place is."

Mr. Abbott charged out of the taxi, and we followed him at a fast clip into a modern brick-and-glass building identified over the entrance as "HUDSON GUILD." Inside, he sprinted up a metal stairway to the second floor and led us to a large rehearsal hall, very light, with a lot of windows, and containing the props of the rehearsal: tapes affixed to the linoleum-tile floor to show positions onstage; a few tables and folding chairs in the stage area; more tables and folding chairs offstage; a large coffee urn and a stack of disposable cups along the wall opposite the windows; above the coffee urn, a bulletin board holding the four-week rehearsal schedule for the play and a sketch of the play's single set—a room in a somewhat seedy hotel in an unnamed medium-sized American city. Mr. Abbott told us that "Winning Isn't Everything" was about a political campaign. All the members of the cast were on hand, together with Mr. Abbott's assistant, Judith Clark, who is his daughter. A thin blonde wearing black pants and a royal-blue turtleneck, Mrs. Clark clearly resembles her father—especially in posture. Also present was Mr. Kalcheim, the playwright, who has a brown mustache and is somewhat bald, and who was wearing aviator sunglasses, gray cords, and a black turtleneck. He was smoking a thin cigar. Everybody present said "Good morning, Mr. Abbott" except Mrs. Clark, who said, "Good morning, George."

"We'll start with the first act," Mr. Abbott said politely, sitting down on a folding chair facing the actors, and inviting us to sit alongside him. Mrs. Clark sat on his other side, at a table, on which she had the script of the play.

Most of the actors and actresses seemed to be in their twenties or thirties, except for the man who played a middle-aged campaign chief—one of the leads. As Mr. Kalcheim joined us, we asked Mr. Abbott how he had come to take on the play, and he said that Audrey Wood, the agent, had sent it to him to read, and he had liked it.

"It's Mr. Abbott's kind of play," Mr. Kalcheim said happily. "There's nothing like working in the theatre," he went on. "I live in Connecticut, with an apartment in New York, and I have to go to California a lot, where the television work is, but for me there's nothing like the theatre. In films or in television, the whole process takes place in the head of the director. But in the theatre you have the interrelationships of the actors. You hear the audience reaction. And you can change it. You work with it a little at a time, layer by layer, like a piece of sculpture."

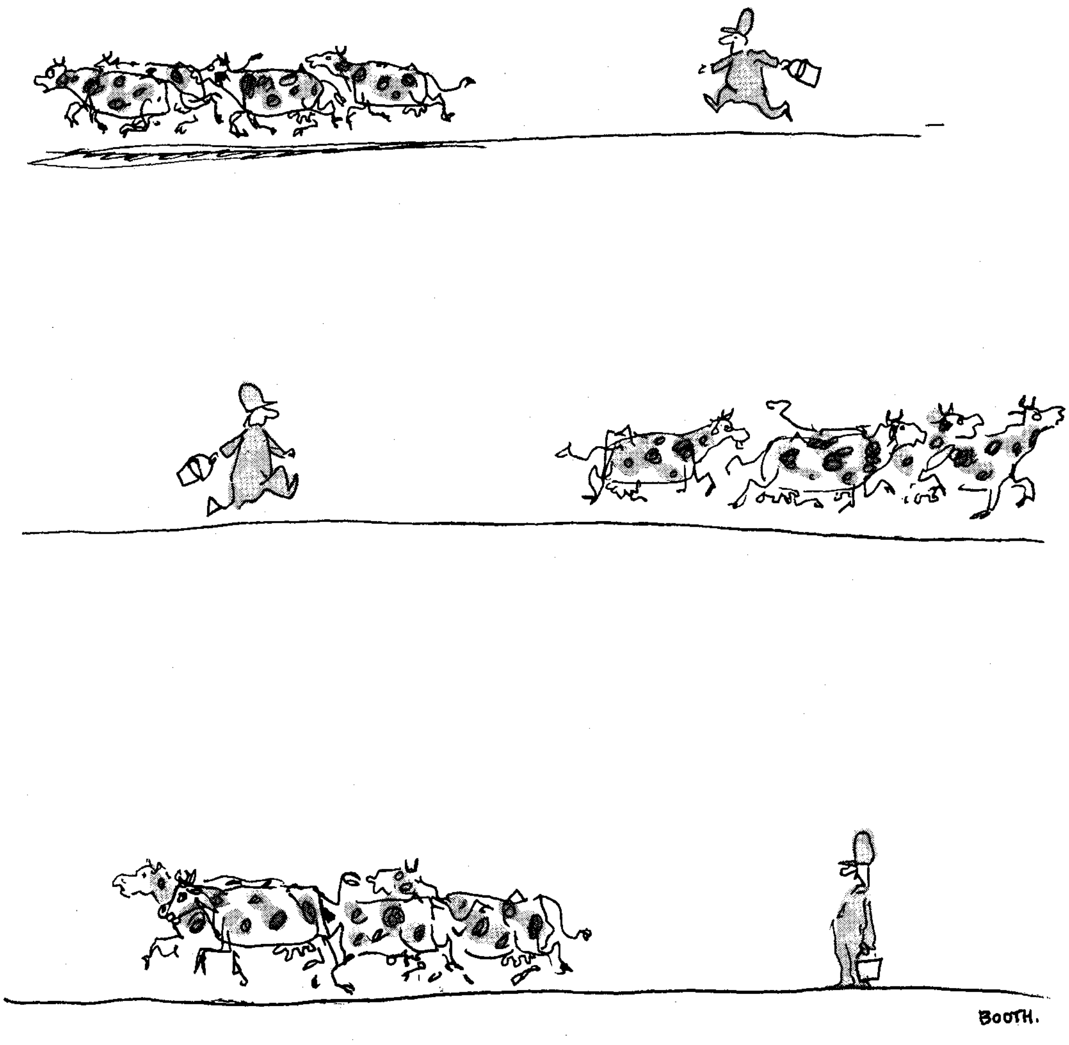
Mr. Abbott looked at the actors. "Let's see if they know the lines," he said, again very politely.

"George, they want to go without the book," Mrs. Clark said.

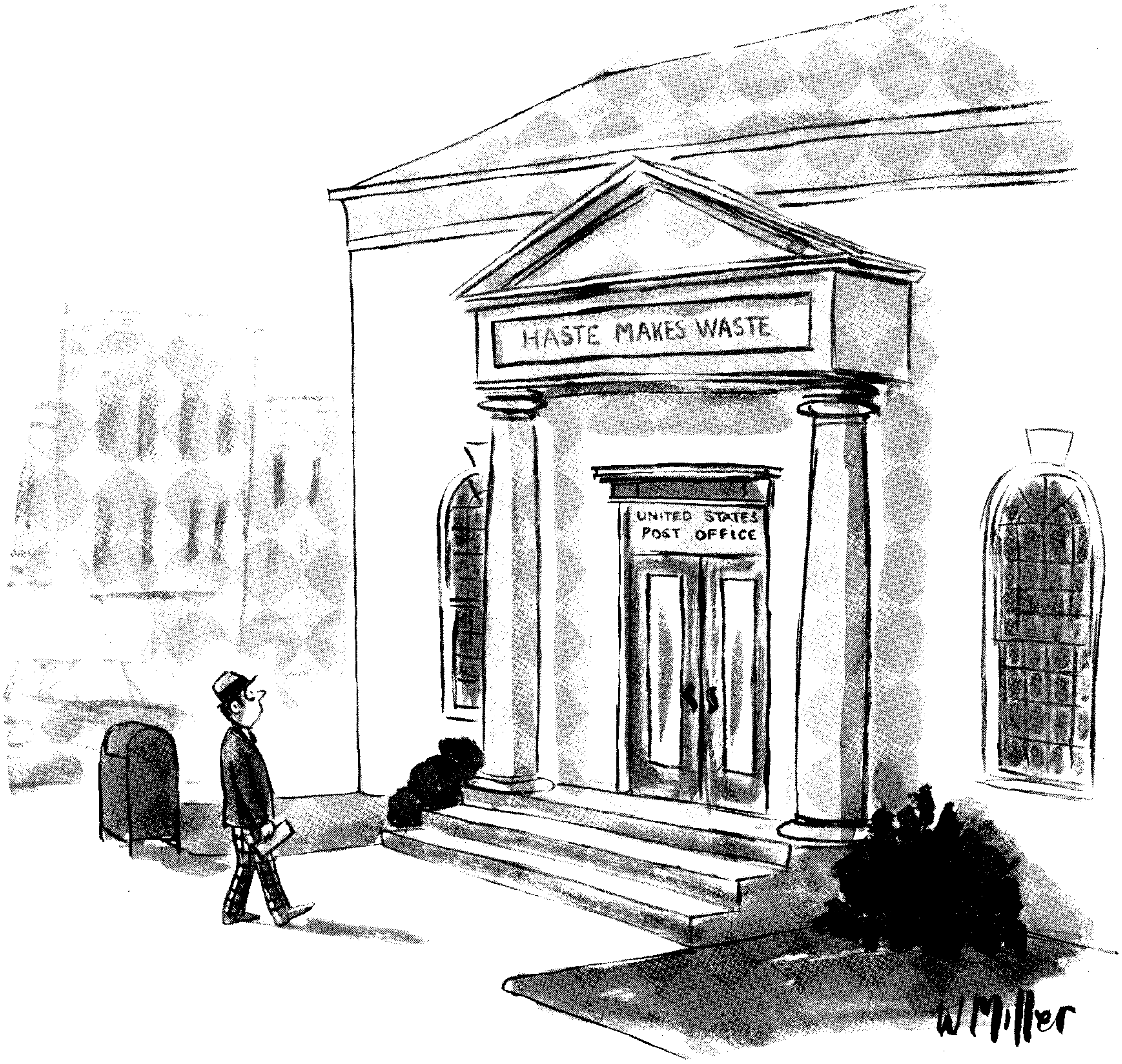
Mr. Abbott nodded in approval, and the rehearsal began.

At the start, Mr. Abbott remained seated, his arms folded across his chest, his posture just as upright as when he was standing. His concentration on the actors was total. Not a syllable got past him. He made terse comments. Very instructive. It all made us long to be on the stage. "Hold your line, please," he would say. "Let the phone ring before you say that." Or "Say the line first, *then* cross." Or "Move over to the other side of the table when you take the thing." Or "Let's say the line standing up, then collapse after the line." Or "Have your back to them when you yell 'Oh, no!' " Or "Excuse me, we'll have an extra yellow pad, so that's your motive for going over there." Or "If you don't say 'freshman' and make it stand out, you don't have anything." Or "You could move upstage a little bit, Kathy." (This was addressed to the ingénue, and he used the character's name, as he does with all the actresses and actors.) Or "You're *bored* with her; sit down." Or "Get up on 'I don't want to.' Up. Up. To *her*, to *her*." Or "Keep that up, *up*. 'Law and *or*-der!' " Or "Don't drop the end of your sentence." Or "Try it again, please." Or "Kathy, don't jump that cue." Or "Let's change it. Say 'Hello,' then walk forward on your line." Or "When you first start, don't face dead out." Or "Your tone is placating. You're like a salesman. A *Buick* salesman." Or "Wait till he shakes his head, then sit on it. Let's get the *sarcasm* in it." Or "Let it hit you a beat before you reply to her announcement."

When it was necessary, Mr. Abbott would change his position. He would jump up to demonstrate a posture, a gesture, a walk, a way of avoiding a collision between actors. Occasionally, he would stand, hands folded behind his back, and lean forward watching intently. Then he would hitch up his pants and sit down.



"Now, see here!"



He would laugh with true enjoyment at some of the jokes. Once in a while, he would tell the actors, with great courtesy, that their delivery of a supposedly funny line was not making him laugh, and would suggest a way of making it work.

"Pick it up, Kathy," he said at one point to the ingénue, and he clapped his hands three times.

"Don't I have to stop and think about it?" Kathy asked.

"No, you think about it and you're dead," Mr. Abbott said.

Everybody at the rehearsal responded to Mr. Abbott with his own kind of complete concentration. Nobody was superficial or just going through the motions. Everybody seemed to be giving everything to the effort. Some of the actors seemed to tire. The men took off their jackets. Not Mr. Abbott. He kept his jacket on, and buttoned.

"Do you want to go back, George, or go on?" his daughter asked him at one point in the first run-through.

"Go on," Mr. Abbott said.

Later, a young production assistant took orders for lunch. Mr. Abbott ordered a ham sandwich on rye toast.

"Milk?" asked the assistant.

"Coffee," Mr. Abbott said.

The actors were not afraid to question Mr. Abbott's decisions.

"Somehow, the blocking in this scene—I don't feel like going to the places I have to go to," said the actor playing the middle-aged campaign manager, whose name was Duffy.

"Yeah, sure, this is only a rough draft," Mr. Abbott said reassuringly. "It's not set in my mind."

Or Mr. Abbott would question his own decisions. "That move I gave you is not good," he said later on to Duffy. "Let's do something else."

During the break for lunch, we noticed that the rehearsal schedule had earlier provided for a day off, and Mr. Abbott told us he had used the time to go to see Woody Allen's movie "Interiors" and had liked it very much. "Wonderful acting," he said, taking a big bite of his ham sandwich.

"So *talky*, though," Mr. Kalcheim said, puffing on his cigar.

"I just saw an even more talky one—that new Swedish one, Ingmar Bergman's 'Autumn Sonata'—and I liked that one even better," Mr. Abbott said, with another of his grins.

"I was surprised to learn the other day that you wrote the screenplay for 'All Quiet on the Western Front,' " Mr. Kalcheim said.

"Oh, I was *one* of the writers on it," Mr. Abbott said, with a laugh. "I directed one pretty good picture—'Manslaughter,' with Claudette Colbert and Freddie March. And the picture versions of 'Damn Yankees' and 'Pajama Game.' But I didn't have the patience for movies. All that sitting around. What we've accomplished so far this morning—that time we would have spent just waiting to set the lights for a movie, and waiting for the actors to come out of their little coops. It always bothered me, spending the company's money in the way they do to make movies. One thing about my pictures, I always had a strict schedule."

As the rehearsal got going again, we were joined by Craig Anderson, the young man who runs the Hudson Guild Theatre. He was looking pleased. "Isn't it refreshing to watch Mr. Abbott work?" he said to us. "To see him give that vitality, that understanding to the actors? His energy, his *talent* is so contagious. He makes people listen to each other. He makes them respond on their feet, the way an actor should. I don't know what's happened, but we don't *have* people like him anymore. Most people even in their fifties are so tired, so uncaring, compared to him. Maybe, if we get people in their twenties and in their thirties to learn from him, we'll save what he represents. That's what Off Off Broadway is all about. Strong, sturdy, dedicated people working with the younger ones. I find myself saying to myself, 'My God, this man is sixty-one years older than I am, but this man is just my age.' "

FROM THE FIFTEENTH DISTRICT

ALTHOUGH an epidemic of haunting, widely reported, spread through the Fifteenth District of our city last summer, only three acceptable complaints were lodged with the police.

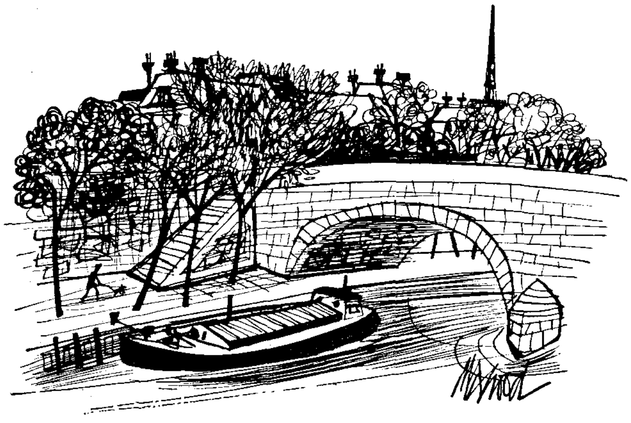
Major Emery Travella, 31st Infantry, 1914-18, Order of the Leopard, Military Beech Leaf, Cross of St. Lambert First Class, killed while defusing a bomb in a civilian area 9 June, 1941, Medal of Danzig (posthumous), claims he is haunted by the entire congregation of St. Michael and All Angels on Bartholomew Street. Every year on the Sunday falling nearest the anniversary of his death, Major Travella attends Holy Communion service at St. Michael's, the church from which he was buried. He stands at the back, close to the doors, waiting until all the communicants have returned to their places, before he approaches the altar rail. His intention is to avoid a mixed queue of dead and living, the thought of which is disgusting to him. The congregation sits, hushed and expectant, straining to hear the Major's footsteps (he drags one foot a little). After receiving the Host, the Major leaves at once, without waiting for the Blessing. For the past several years, the Major has noticed that the congregation doubles in size as 9 June approaches. Some of these strangers bring cameras and tape recorders with them; others burn incense under the pews and wave amulets and trinkets in what they imagine to be his direction, muttering pagan gibberish all the while. References he is sure must be meant for him are worked into the sermons: "And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak" (Luke 7:15), or "So Job died, being old and full of days" (Job 42:17). The Major points out that he never speaks and never opens his mouth except to receive Holy Communion. He lived about sixteen thousand and sixty days, many of which he does not remember. On 23 September, 1914, as a young private, he was crucified to a cart wheel for five hours for having failed to salute an equally young lieutenant. One ankle was left permanently impaired.

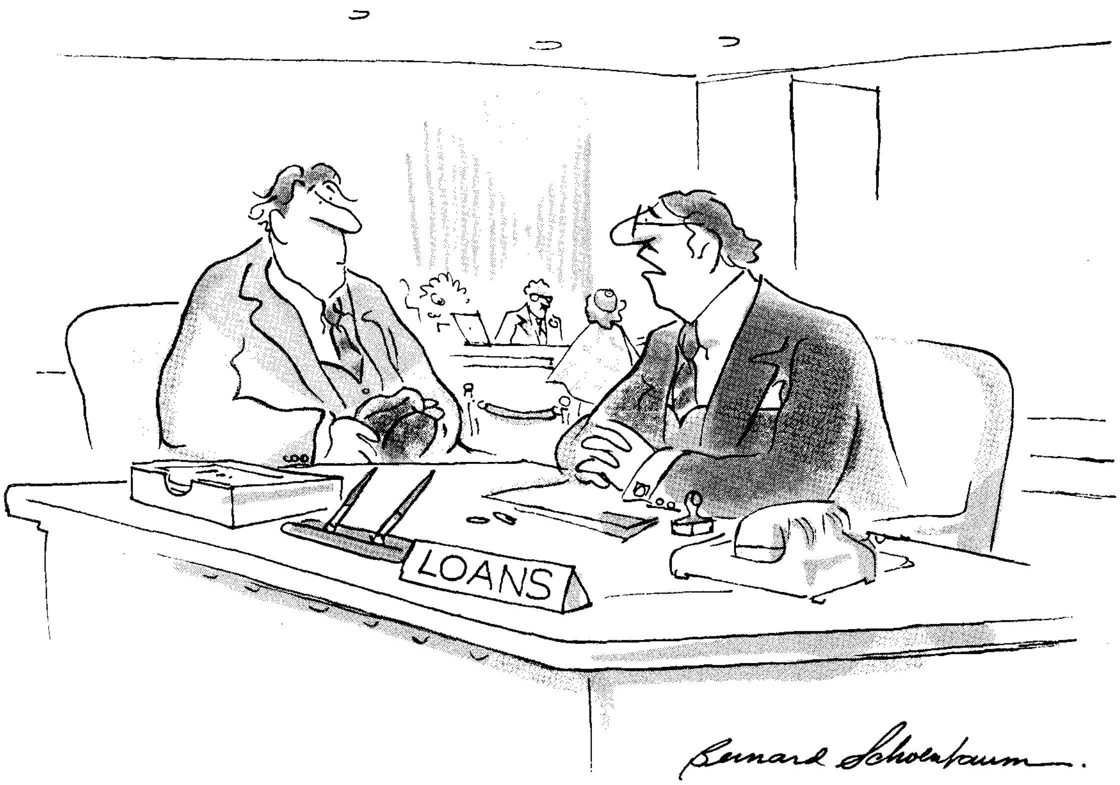
The Major wishes the congregation to leave him in peace. The opacity of the living, their heaviness and dullness, the moisture of their skin, and the dustiness of their hair are repellent to a man of feeling. It was always his habit to avoid civilian crowds. He lived for six years on the fourth floor in Block E, Stoneflower Gardens, without saying a word to his neighbors or even attempting to learn their names. An affidavit can easily be obtained from the former porter at the Gardens, now residing at the Institute for Victims of Senile Trauma, Fifteenth District.

MRS. IBRAHIM, aged thirty-seven, mother of twelve children, complains about being haunted by Dr. L. Chalmeton of Regius Hospital, Seventh District, and by Miss Alicia Fohrenbach, social investigator from the Welfare Bureau, Fifteenth District. These two haunt Mrs. Ibrahim without respite, presenting for her ratification and approval conflicting and unpleasant versions of her own death.

According to Dr. Chalmeton's account, soon after Mrs. Ibrahim was discharged as incurable from Regius Hospital he paid his patient a professional call. He arrived at a quarter past four on the first Tuesday of April, expecting to find the social investigator, with whom he had a firm appointment. Mrs. Ibrahim was discovered alone, in a windowless room, the walls of which were coated with whitish fungus a quarter of an inch thick, which rose to a height of about forty inches from the floor. Dr. Chalmeton inquired, "Where is the social investigator?" Mrs. Ibrahim pointed to her throat, reminding him that she could not reply. Several dark-eyed children peeped into the room and ran away. "How many are yours?" the Doctor asked. Mrs. Ibrahim indicated six twice with her fingers. "Where do they sleep?" said the Doctor. Mrs. Ibrahim indicated the floor. Dr. Chalmeton said, "What does your husband do for a living?" Mrs. Ibrahim pointed to a workbench on which the Doctor saw several pieces of finely wrought jewelry; he thought it a waste that skilled work had been lavished on what seemed to be plastics and base metals. Dr. Chalmeton made the patient as comfortable as he could, explaining that he could not administer drugs for the relief of pain until the social investigator had signed a receipt for them. Miss Fohrenbach arrived at five o'clock. It had taken her forty minutes to find a suitable parking space: the street appeared to be poor, but everyone living on it owned one or two cars. Dr. Chalmeton, who was angry at having been kept waiting, declared he would not be responsible for the safety of his patient in a room filled with mold. Miss Fohrenbach retorted that the District could not resettle a family of fourteen persons who were foreign-born when there was a long list of native citizens waiting for accommodation. Mrs. Ibrahim had in any case relinquished her right to a domicile in the Fifteenth District the day she lost consciousness in the road and allowed an ambulance to transport her to a hospital in the Seventh. It was up to the hospital to look after her now. Dr. Chalmeton pointed out that housing of patients is not the business of hospitals. It was well known that the foreign poor preferred to crowd together in the Fifteenth, where they could sing and dance in the streets and attend one another's weddings. Miss Fohrenbach declared that Mrs. Ibrahim could easily have moved her bed into the kitchen, which was somewhat warmer and which boasted a window. When Mrs. Ibrahim died, the children would be placed in foster homes, eliminating the need for a larger apartment. Dr. Chalmeton remembers Miss Fohrenbach's then crying, "Oh, why do all these people come here, where nobody wants them?" While he was trying to think of an answer, Mrs. Ibrahim died.

In her testimony, Miss Fohrenbach recalls that she had to beg and plead with Dr. Chalmeton to visit Mrs. Ibrahim, who had been discharged from Regius Hospital without medicines or prescriptions or advice or instructions. Miss Fohrenbach had returned several times that April day to see if the Doctor had arrived. The first thing Dr. Chalmeton said on entering the room was "There is no way of helping these people. Even the simplest rules of hygiene are too complicated for them to follow.





"If you've come to borrow, Mr. Sanders, I'm afraid you've come to the wrong place."

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Wherever they settle, they spread disease and vermin. They have been responsible for outbreaks of aphthous stomatitis, hereditary hypoxia, coccidioidomycosis, gonorrheal arthritis, and scleroderma. Their eating habits are filthy. They never wash their hands. The virus that attacks them breeds in dirt. We took in the patient against all rules, after the ambulance drivers left her lying in the courtyard and drove off without asking for a receipt. Regius Hospital was built and endowed for ailing Greek scholars. Now it is crammed with unteachable persons who cannot read or write." His cheeks and forehead were flushed, his speech incoherent and blurred. According to the social investigator, he was the epitome of the broken-down, irresponsible old rascals the Seventh District employs in its public services. Wondering at the effect this ranting of his might have on the patient, Miss Fohrenbach glanced at Mrs. Ibrahim and noticed she had died.

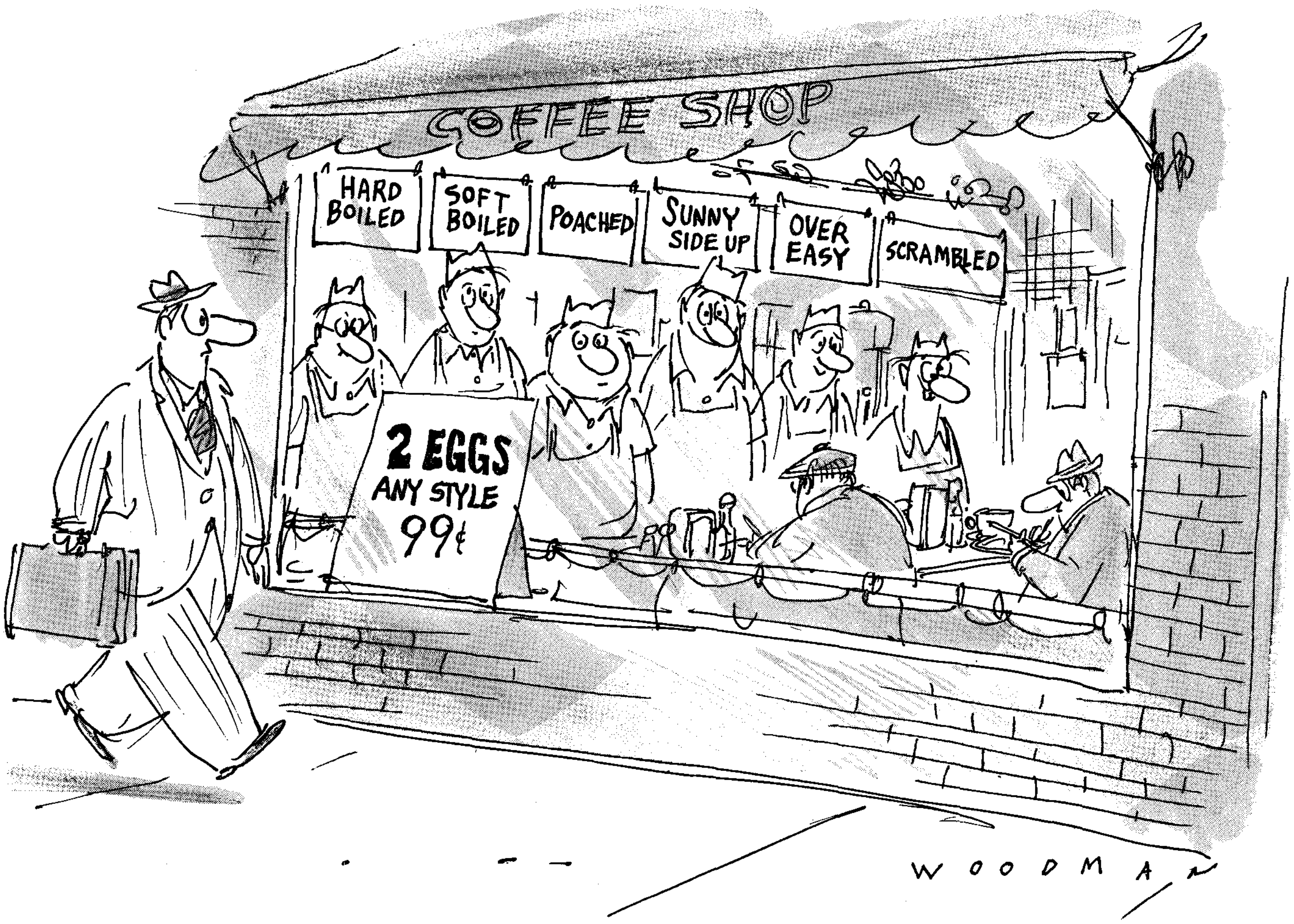
Mrs. Ibrahim's version of her death has the social investigator arriving first, bringing Mrs. Ibrahim a present of a wine-colored dressing gown made of soft, quilted silk. Miss Fohrenbach explained that the gown was part of a donation of garments to the needy. Large plastic bags, decorated with a moss rose, the emblem of the Fifteenth District, and bearing the words "Clean Clothes for the Foreign-Born," had been distributed by volunteer workers in the more prosperous streets of the District. A few citizens kept the bags as souvenirs, but most had turned them in to the Welfare Bureau filled with attractive clothing, washed, ironed, and mended, and with missing buttons replaced. Mrs. Ibrahim sat up and put on the dressing gown, and the social investigator helped her button it. Then Miss Fohrenbach changed the bed linen and pulled the bed away from the wall. She sat down and took Mrs. Ibrahim's hand in hers and spoke about a new, sunny flat containing five warm rooms which would soon be available. Miss Fohrenbach said that arrangements had been made to send the twelve Ibrahim children to the mountains for special winter classes. They would be taught history and languages and would learn to ski.

The Doctor arrived soon after. He stopped and spoke to Mr. Ibrahim, who was sitting at his workbench making an emerald patch box. The Doctor said to him, "If you give me your social-security papers, I can attend to the medical insurance. It will save you a great deal of trouble." Mr. Ibrahim answered, "What is social security?" The Doctor examined the patch box and asked Mr. Ibrahim what he earned. Mr. Ibrahim told him, and the Doctor said, "But that is less than the minimum wage." Mr. Ibrahim said, "What is a minimum wage?" The Doctor turned to Miss Fohrenbach, saying, "We really must try and help them." Mrs. Ibrahim died. Mr. Ibrahim, when he understood that nothing could be done, lay face down on the floor, weeping loudly. Then he remembered the rules of hospitality and got up and gave each of the guests a present—for Miss Fohrenbach a belt made of Syriac coins, a copy of which is in the Cairo Museum, and for the Doctor a bracelet of precious metal engraved with pomegranates, about sixteen pomegranates in all, that has lifesaving properties.

Mrs. Ibrahim asks that her account of the afternoon be registered with the police as the true version and that copies be sent to the Doctor and the social investigator, with a courteous request for peace and silence.

MRS. CARLOTTE ESSLING, née Holmquist, complains of being haunted by her husband, Professor Augustus Essling, the philosopher and historian. When they were married, the former Miss Holmquist was seventeen. Professor Essling, a widower, had four small children. He explained to Miss Holmquist why he wanted to marry again. He said, "I must have one person, preferably female, on whom I can depend absolutely, who will never betray me even in her thoughts. A disloyal thought revealed, a betrayal even in fantasy, would be enough to destroy me. Knowing that I may rely upon some one person will leave me free to continue my work without anxiety or distraction." The work was the Professor's lifelong examination of the philosopher Nicolas de Malebranche, for whom he had named his eldest child. "If I cannot have the unfailing loyalty I have described, I would as soon not marry at all," the Professor added. He had just begun work on "Malebranche and Materialism."

Mrs. Essling recalls that at seventeen this seemed entirely within her possibilities, and she replied something like "Yes, I see," or "I quite under-



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stand," or "You needn't mention it again."

Mrs. Essling brought up her husband's four children and had two more of her own, and died after thirty-six years of marriage at the age of fifty-three. Her husband haunts her with proof of her goodness. He tells people that Mrs. Essling was born an angel, lived like an angel, and is an angel in eternity. Mrs. Essling would like relief from this charge. "Angel" is a loose way of speaking. She is astonished that the Professor cannot be more precise. Angels are created, not born. Nowhere in any written testimony will you find a scrap of proof that angels are "good." Some are merely messengers; others have a paramilitary function. All are stupid.

After her death, Mrs. Essling remained in the Fifteenth District. She says she can go nowhere without being accosted by the Professor, who, having completed the last phase of his work "Malebranche and Mysticism," roams the streets, looking in shopwindows, eating lunch twice, in two different restaurants, telling his life story to waiters and bus drivers. When he sees Mrs. Essling, he calls out, "There you are!" and "What have you been sent to tell me?" and "Is there a message?" In July, catching sight of her at the open-air fruit market on Dulac Street, the Professor jumped off a bus, upsetting barrows of plums and apricots, waving an umbrella as he ran. Mrs. Essling had to take refuge in the cold-storage room of the central market, where, years ago, after she had ordered twenty pounds of raspberries and currants for making jelly, she was invited by the wholesale fruit dealer, Mr. Lobrano, aged twenty-nine, to spend a holiday with him in a charming southern city whose Mediterranean Baroque churches he described with much delicacy of feeling. Mrs. Essling was too startled to reply. Mistaking her silence, Mr. Lobrano then mentioned a northern city containing a Gothic cathedral. Mrs. Essling said that such a holiday was impossible. Mr. Lobrano asked for one good reason. Mrs. Essling was at that moment four months pregnant with her second child. Three stepchildren waited for her out in the street. A fourth stepchild was at home looking after the baby. Professor Essling, working on his "Malebranche and Money," was at home, too, expecting his lunch. Mrs. Essling realized she could not give Mr. Lobrano one good reason. She left the cold-storage room without another word and did not return to it in her lifetime.

Mrs. Essling would like to be relieved of the Professor's gratitude. Having lived an exemplary life is one thing; to have it thrown up at one is another. She would like the police to send for Professor Essling and tell him so. She suggests that the police find some method of keeping him off the streets. The police ought to threaten him; frighten him; put the fear of the Devil into him. Philosophy has made him afraid of dying. Remind him about how he avoided writing his "Malebranche and Mortality." He is an old man. It should be easy.

—MAVIS GALLANT

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Where paper ballots are used, the inspector will initial the two stubs and you will sign your name on the top of the stub. The inspector will return the top stub if the elector is entitled to vote. The elector will then go in the booth to mark his ballot then fold it to leave the stub visible to be detached and the inspector and the ballot will be deposited in the ballot box.—*Orlando (Fla.) Little Sentinel.*

Too complicated.

THE CANOES

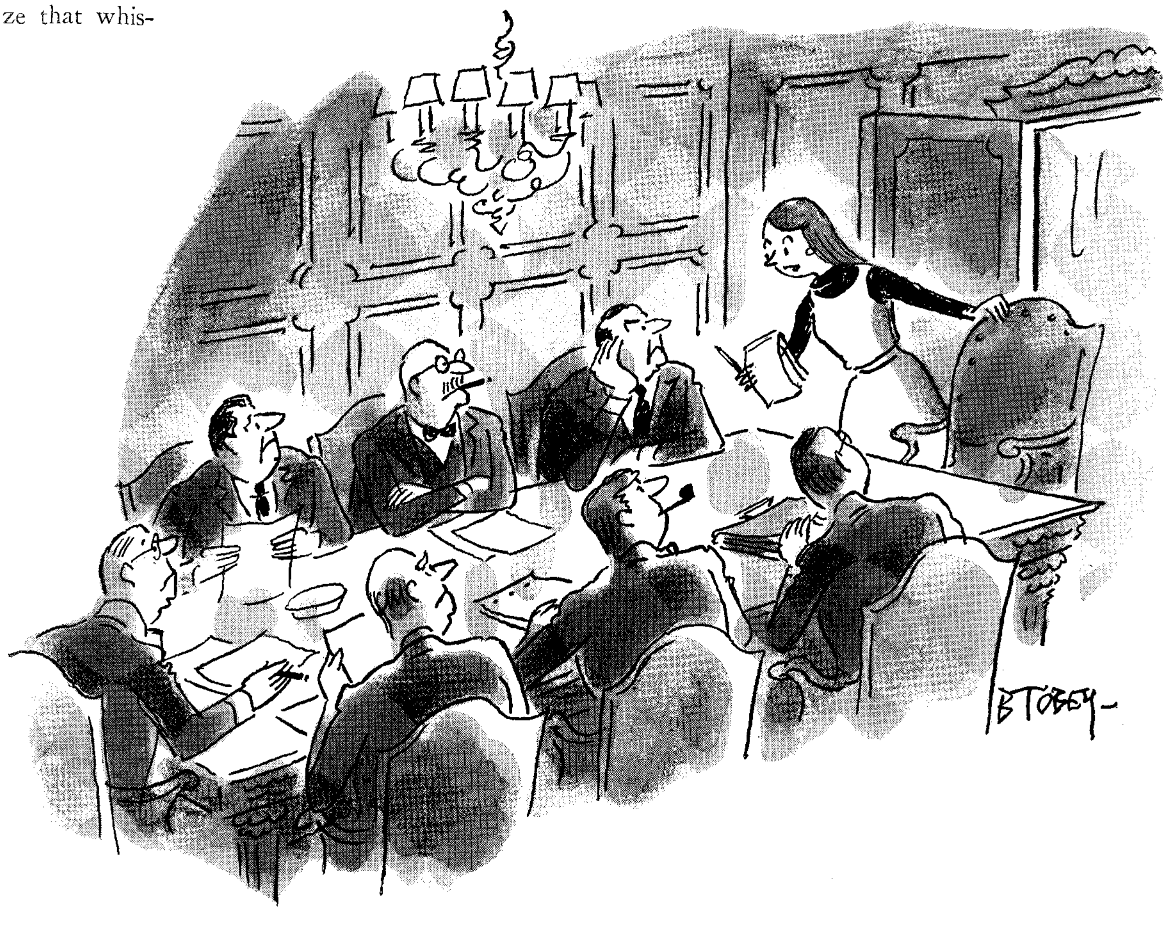
PETER AND ROSALIND BARKER began their holiday on Loch Arn on an evening in the first week of August. We were standing by the rail of what is known in our village of Locharnhead as the Promenade—a name that does no more than repeat the intent of the old Duke, who paid for its construction many years ago as a means of employing our fathers. It is just a widening of the pavement by the side of the road that runs along the head of Loch Arn and then peters out in an unpaved track a mile farther on. We have ten yards of Promenade, and that is not much of a walk. Our fathers used to lean on a low stone wall there. Now, as the old Duke considered this wall a symbol of our fathers' idleness, the job of knocking it down for good wages was meant to be significant. As a boy, I remember the old Duke's rage when, within a day of the work's completion, as he found our fathers loafing on the splendid new barrier they had just built, he craned from the window of his big car and cursed them to lean perpetually on a hot rail by the hearths of damnation. On summer evenings, therefore, we stand where our fathers stood, and one or two very old men sometimes stand beside their sons. For the most part we keep our mouths shut and enjoy the mild breeze that whispers across the water.

The Barkers looked a prosperous young couple. Mr. Barker could have been no more than thirty years of age; his wife might have been a year or two younger. Their skins were already tanned, which I thought strange for two people at the start of their holiday. Mrs. Barker wore a broad red ribbon in her fair hair, and I was pleased to see that her husband was not the sort of young man whose hair hides his ears and touches his shoulders. They both wore those modern clothes that, in my opinion, look so good on young, slender, healthy men and women. And I noticed that they wore those useful shoes that have no laces but can just be kicked off without your stooping to struggle with ill-tied knots as the blood rushes to your head.

Mr. Barker parked his car in the place provided by the County Council, adjacent to the jetty. The jetty was paid for by the old Duke. It is announced as Strictly Private Property on a wooden notice board, though few people here can be bothered to read notices. The paint has long since peeled from it, and its message is rewritten in the badly formed letters of the new Duke's son's factor. Perhaps more would be done for the attractions of Locharnhead, which stands in need of a coat of paint throughout, if it was not the sort of place you can only get back from by returning along the arduous way you came.

Our eyes swung genially to the left to inspect the new arrivals—all, that is, except those of Martin MacEacharn, who is so dull of wit he proclaims himself bored with the examination of tourists. They are a kind of sport with the rest of us. Much amusement has been given to us by campers and hikers and cyclists in their strange garbs and various lengths of shorts and sizes of boots. We tell them they cannot light fires and pitch their tents where they are permitted to do so; and we tell them they may light fires and pitch tents to their hearts' desire where gamekeepers and bailiffs are guaranteed to descend on them once it is dark and there will be inconvenience in finding a legal spot for the night.

Young Gregor remarked enviously on the couple's motorcar. It was low to the ground, green, sleek, and new, and obviously capable of a fair rate of knots. Magee, whose father was an Irishman, ambled over toward Mr. and Mrs. Barker, pretending he was too shy to speak to them. They were admiring the fine view of the long loch from the jetty. Mr. Barker had his arm around his wife's shoulders and was pointing to various phenomena of loveliness in the scenery. They are a familiar sight to us, these couples, who look and behave as if they feel themselves to have arrived in a timeless paradise of water and landscape and courteous strangers in old-fashioned clothes. On fine summer evenings the stillness of the water may be impressed on all your senses to the abandonment of everything else. Our dusks are noted far and wide and remembered by all who have witnessed them. On Loch Arn at dusk the islands become a mist of suggestions. There are old songs that say if only you could go back to them



"Mr. Blaine is on the way. He's jogging over from Sixty-ninth and Fifth."

once more, all would be well with you forever.

Mr. Barker noticed Magee beside him and said, "Good evening," which Magee acknowledged with his shy smile and slow, soft voice. "You'll be looking for me, perhaps," Magee said. All of us leaning on the rail of the Promenade—Muir, Munro, Young Gregor, MacMurdo, MacEacharn, and myself—nodded to each other. When the couple saw us, we all nodded a polite and silent good evening to them, which we believe is necessary, for they have heard of our courtesy, our soft-spoken and excellent good manners and clear speech. All except Martin MacEacharn extended them the thousand welcomes; he was undoubtedly thinking too hard in his miserable way about the Hotel bar behind us and for which he had no money to quench his thirst.

"If you're the boatman, then, yes, you're the man we're waiting for," said Mr. Barker to Magee. My, but he had a bright way of saying it, too, though we all thought that a couple who possessed two long kayak canoes on the trailer behind their motorcar had no need of a boatman. He towered over Magee, who is short, wizened, bowlegged, and thin, though his shoulders are broad. Mrs. Barker, too, was a good half foot taller than him.

"Well, I think I can just about more or less manage it," said Magee, with a quick look at his watch, which has not worked in years. "Yes," he said, for he must always be repeating himself, "just about. Just about, if we're handy-dandy."

"Handy-dandy?" said MacMurdo with contempt. "Where does he pick them up, for goodness' sake?"

Magee, as we all knew, was desperate for a bit of money, but a lethargic disregard of time is obligatory in these parts. Or that, at least, is the legend. What I will say is that if Magee is late for his dinner by so much as half a minute, his wife will scatter it, and probably Magee as well, before her chickens. Social security keeps him and the rest of us alive, and I have yet to see a man late for his money. If it ever came to the attention of the clerk that Donal Magee turns a bob or two with his boat, then he would be in deeper water than the depths of Loch Arn, some of which, they say, are very deep.

It soon became clear why the Barkers couldn't paddle themselves out to Incharn. Gear and suitcases are awkward to transport by canoe. Magee, a lazy man, turned round to us with a silent beckoning. He was asking us to lend him a hand but was frightened to say so aloud for fear that our refusals might ruin the atmosphere of traditional, selfless welcoming he had created with such skill and patience. We turned away with the precision of a chorus line it was once my good fortune to see in one of these American musical films—all, that is, except Martin MacEacharn, who wasn't looking.

WHO WILL DRIVE ME HOME?

Who will drive me home, along the bumpy road—
past the dove-gray bogs and flowing fields?
Who, turning to me, will point with a whip
to the green-hued house amidst birches and rowans?
Who will open the door for me?
Who will cry in the hallway?
And now, right now, is someone there
who could suddenly sense
that under the moon, in a distant land,
I wander, and sing of the past?

—Vladimir Nabokov

(*Translated, from the Russian, by Djemma Bider.*)

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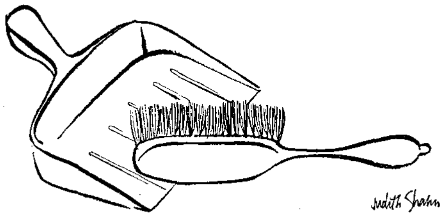
Once Magee had loaded his boat and tied the canoes to its stern, the flotilla set off in the dusk like a mother duck followed by two chicks. I treated them to one of my lugubrious waves, which I am so good at that no one else is allowed to make one while I am there. How many times, after all, have the holiday types said to us, "We will remember you forever"? It is a fine thing, to be remembered.

INCHARN is a small and beautiful island. That, at any rate, is how I remember it, for I have not stepped ashore there since I was a boy. A school friend of mine, Murray Mackenzie, lived on Incharn with his mother and father. Only one house stands there among the trees, with a clearing front and back, between the low knolls at each side of the small island. When the Mackenzies left for Glasgow, or whatever town in the south it was, Murray was given a good send-off at school. We had ginger ale, sandwiches, and paper streamers. The minister of the time presented him with a Holy Bible, in which we all inscribed our names in their Gaelic forms.

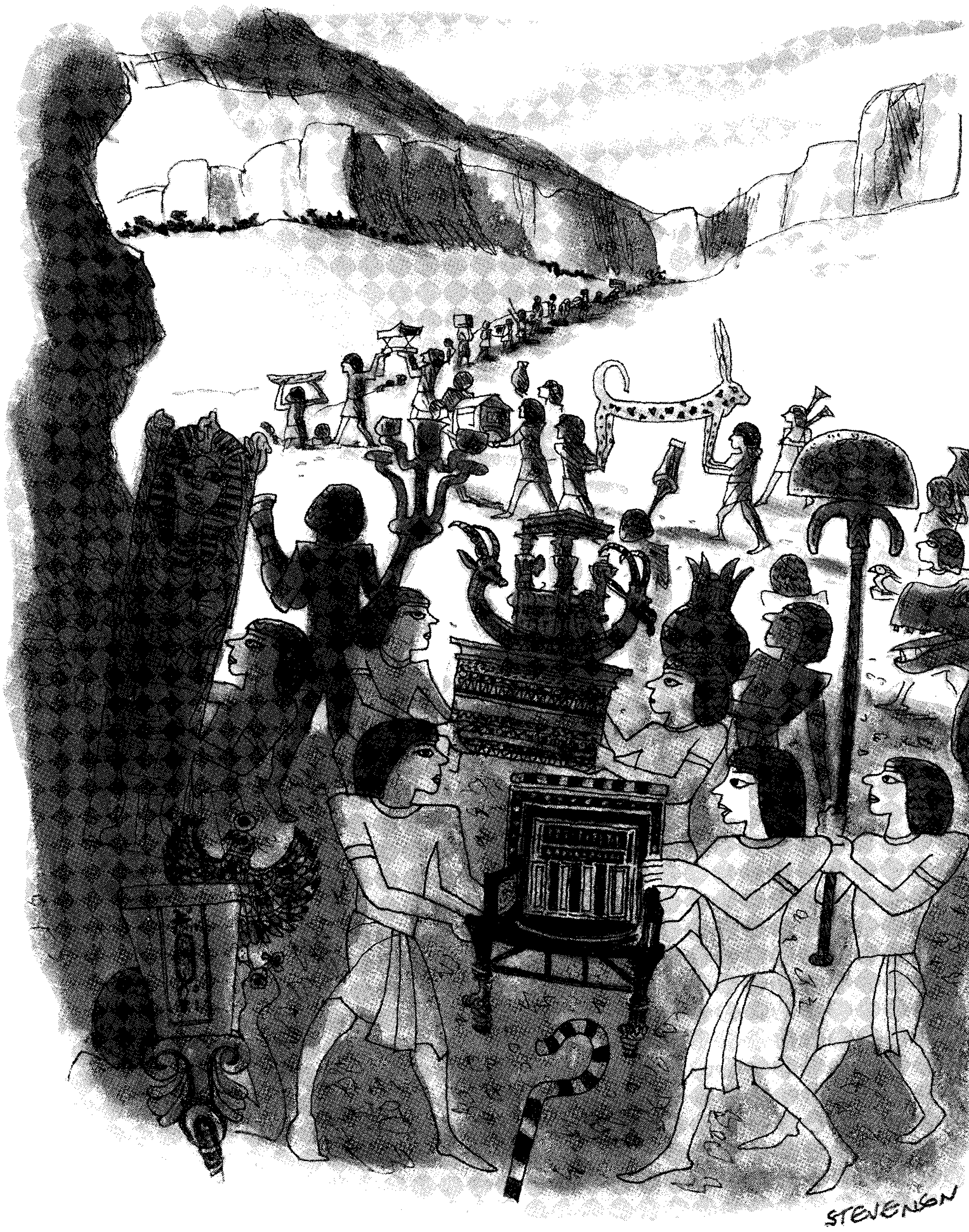
For a good few years the house lay empty. None of the Duke's men were inclined to live there and put up with rowing back and forth on the loch to get to work and come home from it. A childless couple took its tenancy. The man was a forester, and every day he rowed his boat to a little landing stage by the loch side and then followed the steep track over the hill. But his wife was visited by another boat, at whose oars sat Muir's elder brother, a self-confident and boastful lad who had spent four years at sea with the P & O Steam Navigation Company. Still, the poor woman must have been lonely on Incharn, all by herself most of the day, and she would have grown sick of it, especially in winter, waiting for her man to row back in the early dark; and it would have been worse if there had been a wind blowing or a bad snow. Muir's elder brother went back to sea without so much as a farewell to his fancy woman, and he has never been heard of since. She was found by her husband, standing up to her middle in the waters by the pebble beach, shivering and weeping but unable to take that last step—and one more step would have been enough, for it shelves quickly to the depths. They, too, left, soon after that, and the island and its house lay empty. To row past it used to give me the shudders. I was a young man then, and had been away, and would go away again.

For a number of years the house has been rented in the summer months. The Duke's factor will accept only those who are highly recommended by the solicitor in London who handles the Duke's English business.



MAGEE and his hirers were soon no longer visible to the naked eye. We lounged by the rail, which has been rubbed by our hands and elbows to a dull shine. Muir, I think, remembers his lost brother when he looks toward Incharn, though he is too sullen to say so.

"Another couple to Incharn, then," said Munro. "Now, there's been more folk through the door of that house in a couple of years than there have been



"It's a real shame that once Tut's buried nobody will ever see this stuff again."

• •

kin of mine through the door of my mother's house." He always calls his house his mother's. She has been dead for twenty years; but we are born in houses, as well as of mothers.

"It's a sad thing that no one will lend a man the price of a pint of beer," said MacEacharn.

"If we wait for Magee returning," said the cool, calculating, and thirsty MacMurdo, "then we'll have the price of several apiece. A twenty-minute drag over the loch is worth a pound or two."

"Aye," said Young Gregor, "and don't forget the twenty minutes back."

Eyes tried to focus on Incharn as its form vanished into the dusk. Lips were wetted by tongues as we imagined the pints of beer to which Magee might treat us on his return if we behaved nicely toward him or threatened him with violence. But Magee was in one of his funny moods. He is not the man to stand up to a woman like his wife. Munro has said, "I'm glad I am married to the woman who accepted my proposal, but I'm doubly thankful I'm not married as much as all *that*.”

Magee did not come back but illustrated once again how he has inherited from his father an aptitude for the evasion of responsibilities. He beached his boat a few hundred yards to the right of us, where there is a spit of sand, and then went home in the dark with his money, hoping perhaps to buy a few hours of peace and quiet through giving his wife a cut of his boatman's fee.

THAT Magee had been well paid is a matter of which I am certain. A couple of nights after the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Barker, I had nothing to do, and Magee agreed that I go with himself and another English couple to Inverela, where there is another house on the new Duke's son's estates. It stands by the loch side and cannot be reached by road unless you park a mile from it and then walk along a narrow track. To go by boat is only sensible.

“Well, well, then,” Magee began as we were taking our leave of the Englishman on Inverela's tiny landing stage. His wife, by the way, was running around cooing about how wonderful it was, but we took no notice of that. “I hope the weather stays fine and the loch remains as calm as a looking glass all the while you are here.” Highly impressed by this eloquent desire for their comforts, the Englishman gestured for his wife to come over and hear this, because it was obvious that Magee was far from finished. “And may there be no drop of rain, except perhaps once or twice in the night, to make your mornings fresh and to keep the leaves as green as you wish to see them.” They settled back before this recitation. “And may your sleep be undisturbed and tranquil and you have no reminder whatsoever of the cares of the world, which I am told are the very devil outwith of Loch Arn. And, to translate from our Gaelic”—of which Magee knows one curse, two toasts, and a farewell—“may your bannocks never freeze over or your hair fall out, and may you never forget to salt your potatoes.”

I imagined how that couple would say to each other, as soon as our backs were turned, that it was true after all: the people here speak better English than the English. In that matter, the explanation is to be found in the care with which our kinsmen of long ago, in their clachans by the shores of Loch Arn, set about forgetting their original tongue so that their children, and their children's children, and all their posterity would converse in translation.

As Magee stepped into his boat, it was in the way of a man who expects to be paid nothing at all for his trouble. His grateful employer was shuffling in his jacket for money—a sight studiously avoided by Magee's little blue eyes, which are too close together. The Englishman had a look of prosperity about him and a willingness to be forthcoming. “Ah . . . ah . . .” The Englishman was a bit embarrassed. “How much do I owe you?”

Now, there can be a long and historical answer to that one, but Magee thought for a moment with one hand on his chin while the other removed his hat and began scratching his head. “How . . . how much would you say it was worth?”

“Would a fiver do?” said the Englishman. His wife nudged him. Magee, like myself, was quick to notice that this woman, in a hat of unduly wide brim—dressed, it seemed to me, for a safari—was a touch on the overpaying side of humanity.

I was all for putting an end to Magee's playacting and stretching my own hand out to receive the note. But Magee began ponderously calculating: “Now, then . . . It is thirty minutes out, after the ten minutes it took to get you aboard, and unloading you took another ten minutes, while it will take us another thirty to get back home. . . .”

That was a fine stroke of obscurity, for the man was nudged once more by his grinning wife, and he produced another fiver. Two fivers together was more than the government gave you for having no job. Magee looked at the notes as if insulted. “Now, that seems a lot to a man like myself . . . sir,” he said. “How does the seven pounds strike you . . . sir? You see, it's the fair price.”

“A bit of a problem there,” said the gent. “I haven't a single note on me.”

“Then, in that case,” said Magee, a bit too quickly, “I'll take the ten pounds and I'll see you when you come to Locharnhead.”

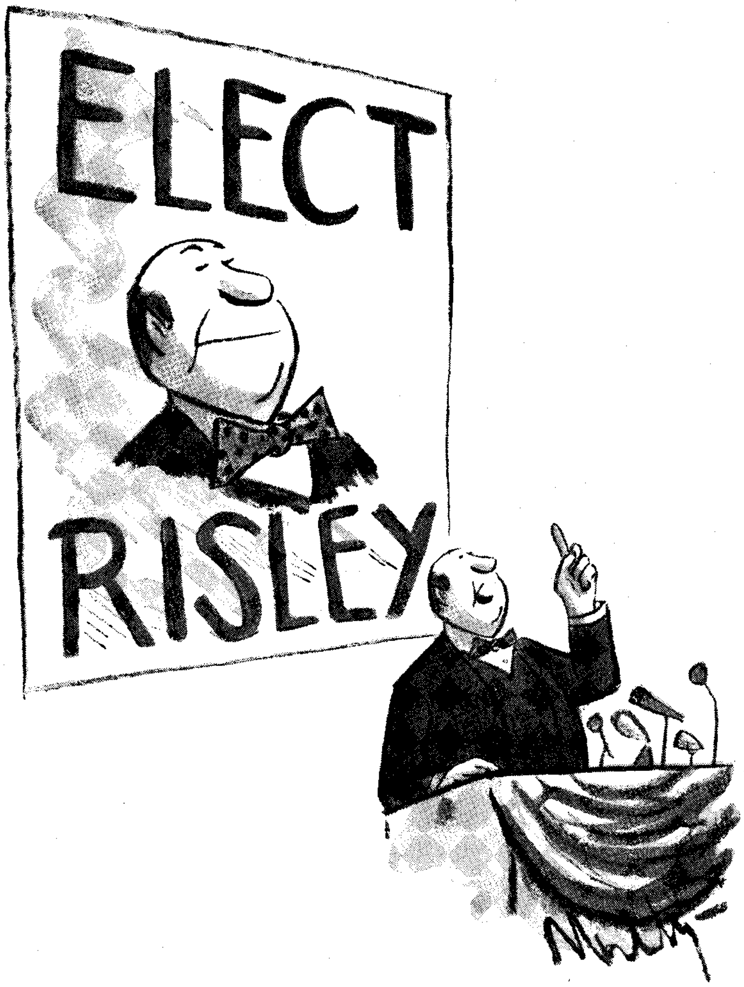
“How will we get there?” asked the woman, who was already blinking in a soft hail of midges.

“By that boat there,” said Magee, who pointed to a beached rowing boat that belonged to the house. “Or you may walk by the track, on your right.”

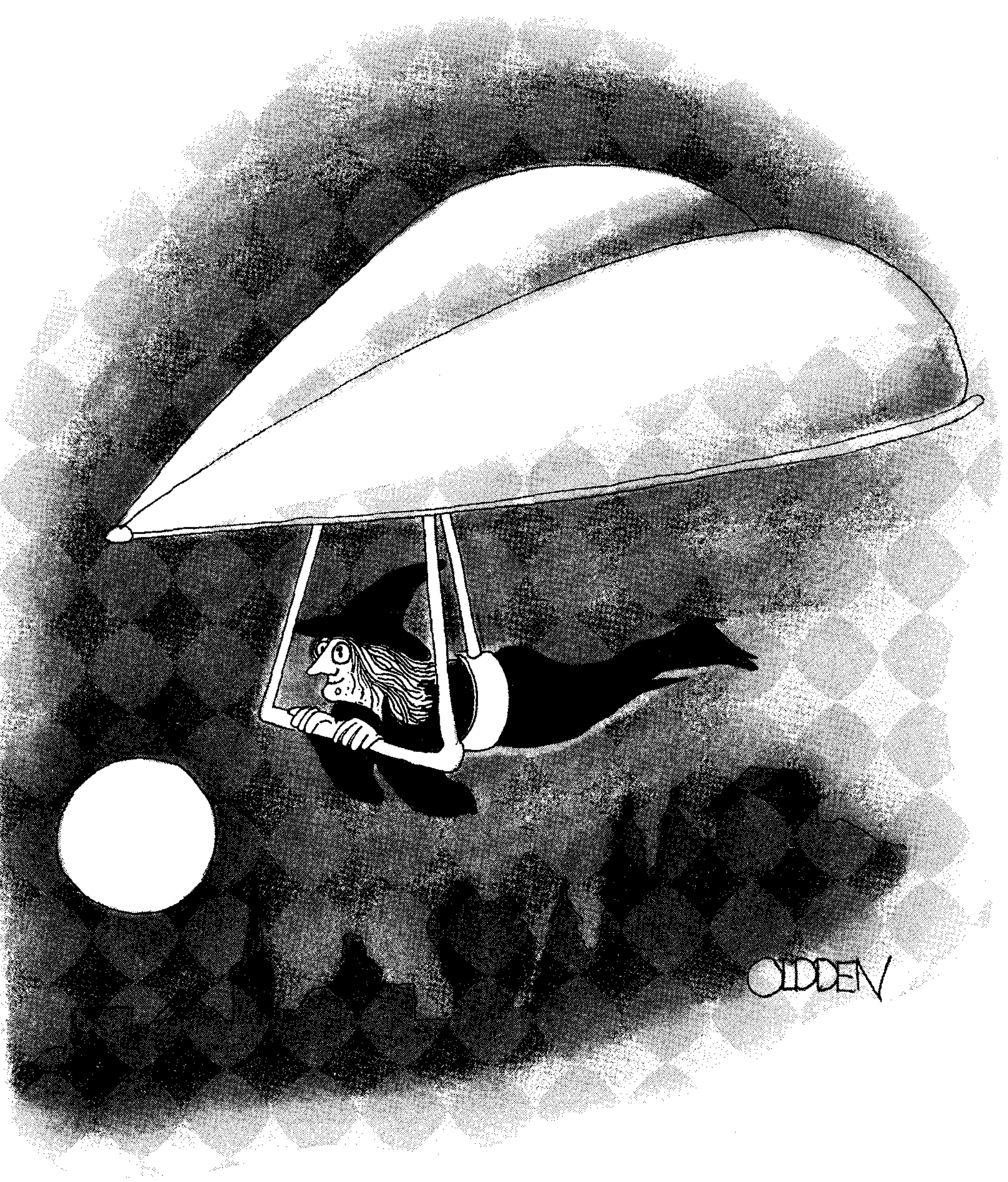
“Ah. I see. Yes, indeed. On the right, you say?”

“On the right, sir. But you will be quicker by the loch.”

I remember it took the Englishman four hours to row to Locharnhead the following



“You will find that I am sympathetic to the plight of the farmer, the consumer, the small businessman, corporations, tenants, landlords, minorities, endangered species . . .”



day, for that canny son of an Irishman had been to Inverela that morning to hide one of the oars. Magee did well with a sort of contract for their subsequent transportation.

"Ten pounds for a night's work, Magee," I said on our return voyage. "Is it not a liberty to take so large a sum, even from an Englishman who looks as though he can well afford it?"

"Do you want a drink?" he asked. "Or do you want a *good* drink?"

"You know me," I said.

"Then hold your hush and don't whine at me for a hypocrite. Because daylight robbery is exactly what it is, and you and the rest of them will sup on the benefit of it. Though I'll tell you true enough that if he didn't look such a pig of a rich man in his pink shirt and white breeks, I'd have let him off with the three pounds the factor says is the fixed charge to Inverela."

We passed Incharn on the return trip in the late dusk. I waved to its holiday tenants, who had lit a fire on the beach. That couple we'd just left at Inverela could not be imagined lighting a bonfire. I had a feeling the Barkers would have been glad of our company if we had called on them for a few moments, but the thirsty lads, we knew, would be waiting for us on the Promenade, and with me in the boat Magee would have no chance of getting up to his tricks. In the light of their bonfire Mr. and Mrs. Barker looked like people of the far long ago, when, we are told, there was great happiness and heroism in the world. Or it may just have been the way they carried their youthfulness that led me to think so.

"Now, I hope you didn't fleece that nice couple of the Barkers there."

"What kind of a thief do you take me to be? I asked for the factor's fixed charge, and they were kind enough to pass me a fiver."

"Aye, well, there will be no more work for you out of that pair. These two are water babies."

A DAY or two later I was walking on the hill. My old pal Red Alistair was, I knew, reluctantly laying down a drain on the Duke's lower pastures—the one he was meant to do the year before but didn't get around to finishing. He is called Red on account of the political pamphlets he inherited from his father. He is annoyed by the nickname, being twice the Tory even than the new Duke's son, and he keeps his legacy of pamphlets in deference to his father's memory. As I was looking for Red Alistair, I found the minister scrutinizing the loch through his spyglass.

"Now, there's a sight I've never seen on the loch before," he said. "There are two canoes on it today."

He gave me his glass and I had a clear view of Mr. and Mrs. Barker in single line ahead. They wore yellow waterproof jackets and sensible life jackets as well, which was a relief to me.

"Is there any chance of that becoming popular?" I asked the minister, after I had told him who the two canoeists were and what nice people they had turned out to be.

"You should ask that of Young Gregor. He's the boy who's daft on boats round here, though if he ever opens that marina he does nothing but talk about, we will become a laughingstock for our broken craft, and make no mistake."

He was as disappointed in Young Gregor as we all were. "Go, for God's sake, to a southern city," we urged the boy. "There's nothing here but old men and the bed-and-breakfast trade." Lack of capital was what he complained of—that and the poor show of enthusiasm he received from the manager of the Bank, which comes twice a week to Locharnhead in a caravan escorted by a police car.

"These canoes can fairly shift some," said the minister. "My, if I was young, I'd be inclined to try my hand at that. What an emblem of youth is there before our eyes."

"We should encourage Young Gregor in it," I suggested. "These craft appear to have no engines at all."

"That boy will break my heart. Is there *nothing* that can be found for him to do?"

"Can you imagine any woman from round here sporting about on the water like that?"

"Our women are not so much bad-natured as unpredictable," he decided. "By and large, though, it might be the bad nature you cannot predict. But we have known great joys in our time. There is no sweeter thing in this life than an harmonious domesticity. You know, I even miss the bad nature of my late wife." He paused as he peered through his telescope. "They are a tall couple, these English Barkers."

"They tell me she is called Rosalind."

"Now, that is a name from Shakespeare, I believe."

"Then it's a fair English name," I remember saying, "for a young woman as handsome as Mrs. Barker and with a true demeanor to go with it."

"It makes a change from Morag, or Fiona, I'll say that much," said the minister.

For many more minutes we stood there on the hill, exchanging the spyglass as we watched the two canoes.

"What time is it?" asked the minister.

"I think it must be Thursday, for I saw the women waiting on the fishmonger's van, and they had no shopping bags with them."

MR. AND MRS. BARKER visited the Hotel bar in the early part of some evenings for a drink and a bite to eat. While they were inside, we took the opportunity of examining their Eskimo craft—not, of course, that there is much to look at in a kayak canoe. I studied them longer than the others had the patience for. A jaunt in one of them would have been very satisfying. To have asked Mr. Barker might have been thought a bit eccentric of me, though I doubt if he would have taken it as an impertinence. Their canoes had a very modern look to them, as, indeed, had that bright and lively couple with their air of freedom.

"Aye," said MacMurdo, who joined me on the jetty, "that must be a fine and healthy outdoor sport for them—the sort of thing that could set you up for the winter and keep you well." MacMurdo, fresh-faced as he is for his years, is housebound for three months of the calendar with the sniffles. When the Barkers came back, we stood to one side and said our soft "Good evening" together, which they returned. Then we watched them slip into their canoes and paddle away into the early dusk.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN

October, that glittering rakehell month,
snorts in the bushes where the widow is
busy with weeds. They still defeat her,
with whom she has trafficked for years,
but what if she, puttering, with rake,
with shears, should suddenly discover
her fingers have gone numb? On bent knees,
her face lifted so the black streaks
of earth seem time's batterings, she
may yet remember the high shrill stars
at the edge of summer and sing, for
behind them a darkness not earth parts
gently again and again. And if, then,
brow breaks in light sweat so she wears
the mask that runs to mud along bone,
watch her, lean close and hear her
stab as deep as ever through the hours.
She was beautiful once and may be again.
In October the leaves are lipped in ice,
but heat, like hope, lingers in flowers
and nails and the secret song she sings.

—DAVE SMITH

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"It's the best time of all to be on the water," said MacMurdo. "Just look at the beauty of it over there. The whole world is getting itself ready to settle down for the night."

"Do you think he'd mind if I asked him—I mean, if he'd let me take his canoe out for a few minutes?"

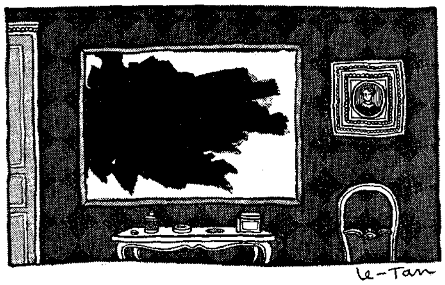
"What's so special about one of these canoes?"

"They strike me for one thing as an exciting little sort of a craft, that's what. Now, look there, and see how close you would be to the water."

"A man of your age . . . A boat like that is for young things."

"It would be interesting to *me*."

A MAN like myself might be expected to resent these folk who come up from the south like the swallows to take their ease on a country that has brought me no prosperity. All the same, no one can tell me better than I tell myself I am as lazy as any man born. Part of my trouble is that I have become content enough on plain victuals in modest quantities and two packets of Players a week. What jobs I've done in other parts than this one did not contribute much to my happiness. But there are things I've seen, and people I've met, I would not do without if I had my chance again. When the mobile library, which is a wonderful thing, calls at Locharnhead, I am the first man aboard and the last man out. That is not hard, as the only other reader in our community, apart from the youngest MacMurdo when he's at home, is Mrs. Carmichael, wife of our stingy publican and the Hotel's cook. By the way, I once ate a large dinner there. It was not worth the money, and Magee and the rest of them watched me through the window for all five courses, screwing up their faces and licking their chops in an ironic manner. MacEacharn, I noticed, was there, too, but that obstinate man wasn't even looking.



But for all the large contrast between myself and the likes of Mr. and Mrs. Barker, it made me mellow and marvellously sad to watch them paddle in the still waters of Loch Arn at dusk, going toward Incharn, where the Mackenzies once lived, and that unhappy couple who followed them.

Incharn, as I have said, is a beautiful island. A good number of trees grow there, and on the side you cannot see from the head of the loch there is low ground and a growth of reeds of which nesting swans and water-

BUREAU OF COUNTER-PRODUCTION
Opie

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fowl are appreciative. This is the most beautiful side of all, though you can only see it properly from the water, which means that it has been observed by few people. Facing Locharnhead, the beach is of fine pebbles, and it slopes quickly into the water. Crab apples grew there when my friend Mackenzie lived on it, and that bitter fruit made grand jelly in his mother's big copper pan. They had a black leaded stove of great size, which Mrs. Mackenzie kept as spotlessly black as a Seaforth's boots, and we were famous for the spit and polish. Mrs. Mackenzie would do her washing in a wooden tub on the beach, and her suds floated and spread as Murray and I threw stones at the scattering patches of foam. People on holiday do no washing at all, I'm told. Sometimes I felt like telling Mr. and Mrs. Barker about Incharn, but I never got round to it. They might have been interested. Magee has been known to tell those he ferries to the island of the tragedy that befell there. In his story, the woman drowned herself, and her demented husband first slew her lover with his bare hands and then committed his own life to the chill waters, but it was not that way. For all I know, the Barkers heard that story from Magee; but if they did, they were too happy to pay it any heed.

At night you can see the small lights of the cottage if its blinds or curtains are not drawn. In our famous dusks and sunsettings, the lights seem to spread in the open and watery mist, and they float above the island like benedictions. A man can look toward Incharn and feel drawn toward it. Muir's brother may have felt that, too, for whether the beauty of a place discriminates among those who are to be compelled by it is not a subtlety I am prepared to go into. Incharn draws a charitable thought from me, at any rate. But then I was always a bachelor, though not because I wanted to be one; and so I am always glad of something that holds disgruntlements at bay. All winter long I look forward to the holiday couples. It would please me more if Mr. and Mrs. Barker were to come back, with their frail canoes, and the way they splashed each other with water off their paddles, and capsized and rolled over under the water and came back up again as my heart beat with admiration for them—and, above all, the way they just followed each other about on the still water.

—Douglas Dunn

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A great new guessing game in New York media circles is "Who Did Author Gregory McDonald Base What Character On Whom?" in his "Fletch's Fortune," the third in the Fletch mystery series.—*Aaron Gold in the Hartford Courant.*

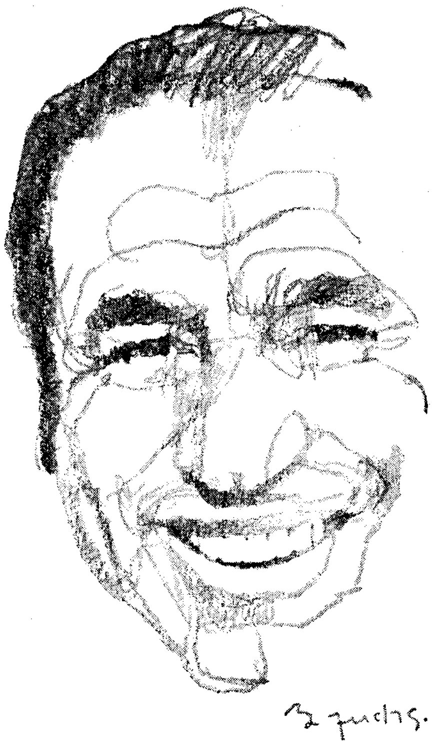
Exactly *which* New York media circles?

PROFILES

FROLICS AND DETOURS OF A SHORT HEBREW MAN

ON a warm night in October, 1959, I was bidden to a party at Mamma Leone's, a restaurant on Forty-eighth Street that was (and is) one of the largest and most popular in Manhattan's theatre district. Random House had taken it over for the evening to celebrate the publication of "Act One," the first volume of Moss Hart's autobiography, which in no way surprised its publishers by turning out to be a best-seller. A further excuse for festivity was the fact that the author's fifty-fifth birthday was to take place the following day. By any standards, the guest list—some two hundred strong—was fairly eye-catching. In addition to a favored bunch of critics and columnists, it included a representative selection of the show-business celebrities then in New York, among them Claudette Colbert, John Gielgud, Sam Goldwyn, Margaret Leighton, Ed Sullivan, Alan Jay Lerner, Yves Montand, Simone Signoret, Ethel Merman, Alec Guinness, Truman Capote, Rosalind Russell, and Marlene Dietrich—at which point my memory gives out. A group of Moss Hart's admirers had put together an entertainment in his honor, and this was already under way when I arrived. Betty Comden and Adolph Green were just finishing a routine that satirized some of the more disastrous ways in which "Act One" might be adapted for the screen. During the applause, I was burrowing through the resplendent mob, and, like many of my fellow-guests, I failed to catch the names of the next performers when they were introduced by the master of ceremonies, Phil Silvers.

Peering over the heads of a hundred or so standees, in front of whom other spectators sat, squatted, or sprawled, I saw two men in business suits. One, tall and lean, was conducting an interview with the other, who was short and compact. Their faces were among the few in the room which were not instantly recognizable. Though I took no notes, I recall much of what they said, and the waves of laughter that broke over it, and the wonder with which I realized that every word of it was improvised. The tall man was suave but relentlessly probing, the stubby one urgent and eager in response, though capable of outrage when faced with questions he regarded as offensive. Here, having been shaken in the sieve of nineteen years, is what my memory retains:



Mel Brooks

Q.: I gather, sir, that you are a famous psychoanalyst?

A.: That is correct.

Q.: May I ask where you studied psychiatry?

A.: At the Vienna School of Good Luck.

Q.: Who analyzed you?

A.: I was analyzed by No. 1 himself.

Q.: You mean the great Sigmund Freud?

A.: In person. Took me during lunchtime, charged me a nickel.

Q.: What kind of man was he?

A.: Lovely little fellow. I shall never forget the hours we spent together, me lying on the couch, him sitting right there beside me, wearing a nice off-the-shoulder dress.

Q.: Is it true, sir, that Mr. Moss Hart is one of your patients?

A.: That is also correct. [As everyone present knew, Moss Hart had been in analysis for many years, and made no secret of the benefits he had derived from it.]

Q.: Could you tell us, sir, what Mr. Hart talks about during your analytic sessions?

A.: He talks smut. He talks dirty, he talks filthy, he talks pure, unadulterated smut. It makes me want to puke.

Q.: How do you cope with this?

A.: I wash his mouth out with soap. I tell him, "Don't talk dirty, don't say those things."

Q.: What are Mr. Hart's major problems? Does he have an Oedipus complex?

A.: What is that?

Q.: You're an analyst, sir, and you never heard of an Oedipus complex?

A.: Never in my life.

Q.: Well, sir, it's when a man has a passionate desire to make love to his own mother.

A. [after a pause]: That's the dirtiest thing I ever heard. Where do you get that filth?

Q.: It comes from a famous play by Sophocles.

A.: Was he Jewish?

Q.: No, sir, he was Greek.

A.: With a Greek, who knows? But, with a Jew, you don't do a thing like that even to your wife, let alone your mother.

Q.: But, sir, according to Freud, *every* man has this intense sexual attachment to his—

A.: Wait a minute, wait a minute, whoa, gee-haw, just hold your horses right there. Moss Hart is a nice Jewish boy. Maybe on a Saturday night he takes the mother to the movies, maybe on the way home he gives her a little peck in the back of the cab, but going to bed with the mother—get out of here! What kind of smut is that?

Q.: During your sessions with Mr. Hart, does he ever become emotionally overwrought?

A.: Very frequently, and it's a degrading spectacle.

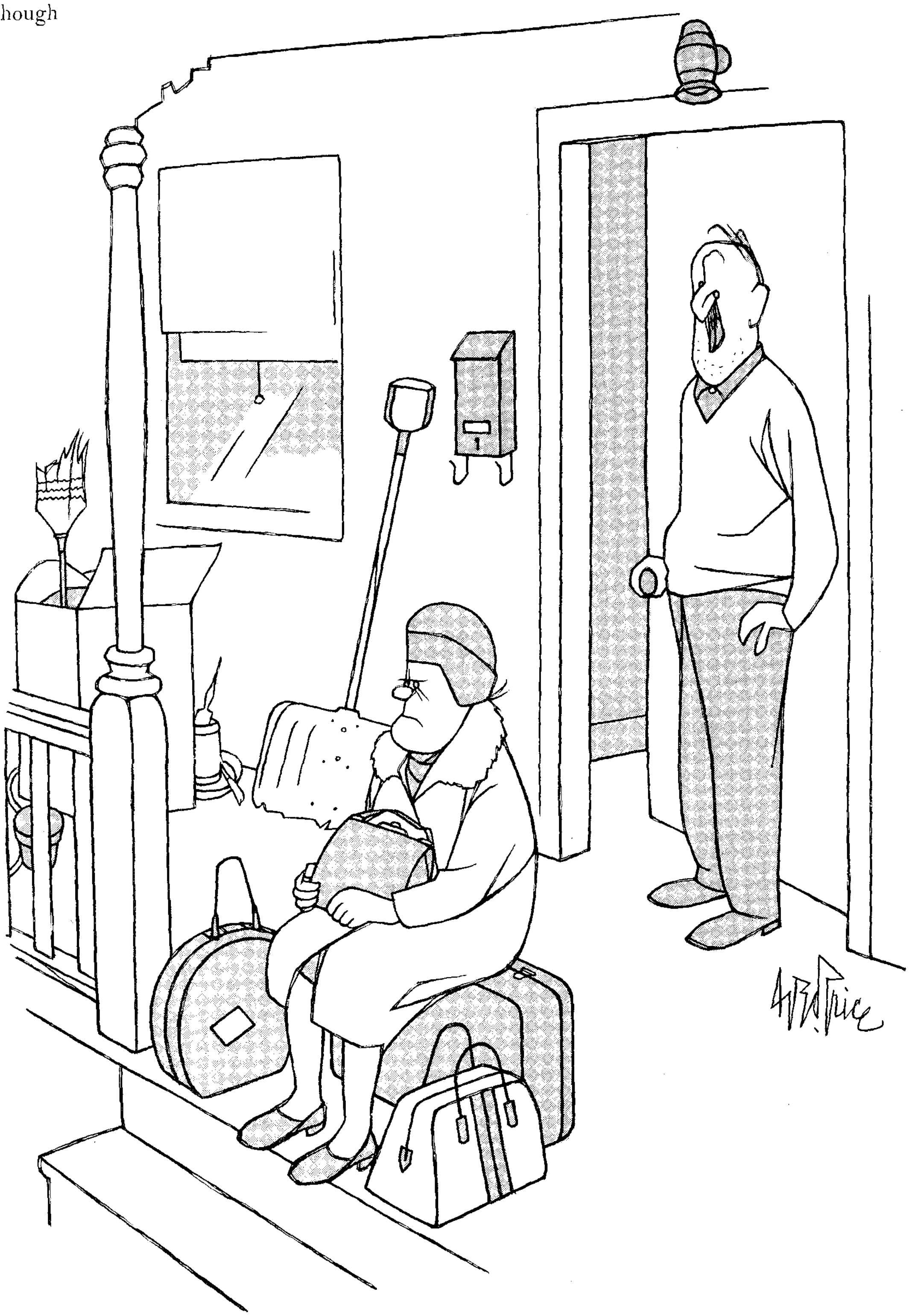
Q.: How do you handle these situations?

A.: I walk straight out of the room, I climb up a stepladder, and I toss in aspirins through the transom.

When they stopped, after about a quarter of an hour, the cabaret ended, and that was just as well, for nobody could have followed them. A crowd of professional entertainers erupted in cheers. The idea of a puritanical analyst was a masterstroke of paradox, and the execution had matched the concept in brilliance. Moss Hart was heard to say that the act was the funniest fourteen minutes he could remember. The room buzzed with comment, yet hardly anyone seemed to know who the little maestro was. Diligent quizzing revealed that he was a thirty-three-year-old television writer, that he had spent most of the preceding ten years turning out sketches for Sid Caesar, and that his name was Mel Brooks. I later discovered that his interrogator was Mel Tolkin, another, and a senior, member of the renowned menagerie of authors whose scripts, as interpreted by Caesar, Imogene Coca, and a talented supporting cast, had made "Your Show of Shows" a golden landmark in the wasteland of television comedy. Tolkin (a harassed-looking man, once compared by Brooks to "a stork that dropped a baby and broke it and is coming to explain to the parents") was standing in at the party for Carl Reiner, a gifted performer who had also been part of the Caesarean operation. Ever since Brooks and Reiner met, in 1950, they had been convulsing their friends with impromptu duologues. The Moss Hart jamboree was an important show-business event, and, the press being present in force, it would have marked their semi-public début. Unfortunately, Reiner had a TV job in Los Angeles and could not make the date; hence his replacement by Tolkin, who had performed with Brooks on several previous occasions, though never in front of such a daunting audience. I knew nothing of this at the time; Tolkin struck me as a first-rate straight man. All I knew as I left Mamma Leone's that night was that his stubby, pseudo-Freudian partner was the most original comic improviser I had ever seen.

WE move forward to Hollywood in 1977. Carl Reiner, who has just directed a boomingly successful comedy called "Oh, God!," recalls for me the events that led up to Brooks's appearance at the Hart party. "During the fifties," he says, "we spent our days inventing characters for Caesar, but Mel was really using Caesar as a vehicle. What he secretly wanted was to perform himself. So in the evening we'd go to a party and I'd pick a character for him to play. I never told him what it was going to be, but I always tried for something that would force him to go into panic, because a brilliant mind in panic is a wonderful thing to see. For instance, I might say, 'We have with us tonight the celebrated sculptor Sir Jacob Epstone,' and he'd have to take it from there. Or I'd make him a Jewish pirate, and he'd complain about how he was being pushed out of the business because of the price of sailcloth and the cost of crews nowadays. Another time, I introduced him as Carl Sandburg, and he made up reams of phony Sandburg poetry. There was no end to what he could be—a U-boat commander, a deaf songwriter, an entire convention of antique dealers.

"Once, I started a routine by saying, 'Sir, you're the Israeli wrestling champion of the world, yet you're extremely small. How do you manage to defeat all those enormous opponents?' 'I give them a soul kiss,' he said, 'and they're so shocked they collapse. Sometimes I hate doing it, like when it's a Greek wrestler, because they have garlic breath.' I asked him whether he was homosexual. 'No, I have a wife.' 'But what's the difference between kissing her and kissing a wrestler?' 'My wife,' he said, 'is the only one I know who kisses from the inside out.' That was pure Mel—a joke so wild it was almost abstract. I used to enjoy trying to trap him. One night, when he was doing an Israeli heart surgeon, I said, 'Tell me, sir, who's that huge man standing in the corner?' 'Who knows? Who cares?' 'But surely, sir, you don't want a total stranger hanging around your operating theatre, bringing in germs?' 'Listen, in a hospital, a few germs more or less, what's the difference?' 'Even



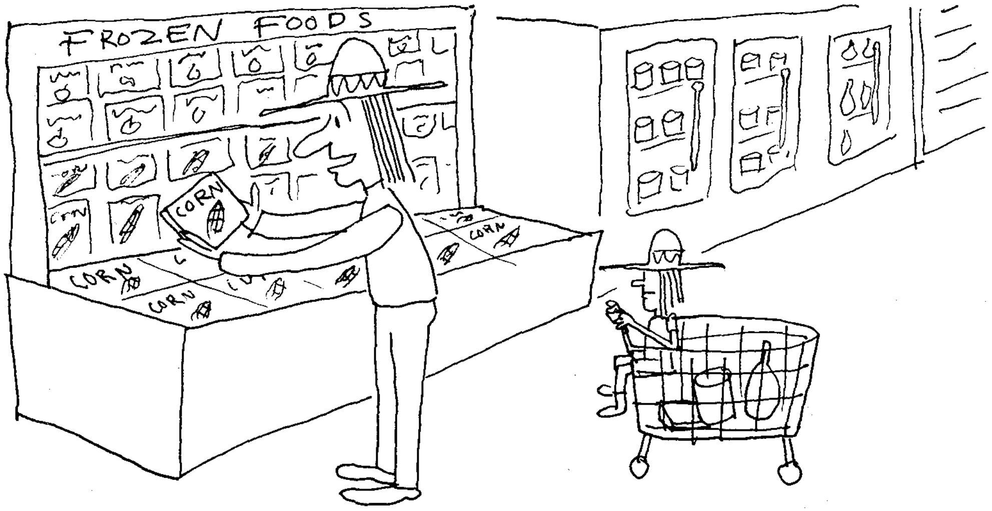
"Well, when you do come up with a parting shot, I'll be in the den."

so,' I said, 'I'm still curious to know what that very large gentleman does.' 'Look,' he said. 'He's a big man, right? With a lot of muscle? You're small and Jewish, you don't mess around with big guys like that. Let him stand there if he wants to.' I still wouldn't let him off the hook. 'But what's that strange-looking machine beside him?' 'You mean the cyclotron?' 'No, the one next to that.' 'Oh,' he said, 'that is the Rokeach 14 machine. It makes Jewish soap powder. As you well know, we Jewish doctors are incredibly clean, and we try not to soil our patients during the macabre process of cutting them to pieces. We get through an awful lot of Rokeach 14.' Rokeach is in fact a brand of kosher soap used by orthodox Jews." (Brooks later told me, apropos of Reiner's attempts to outwit him, "He was absolutely dazzling. I'd be going along pretty good, getting laughs, and he would suddenly people the room with alien characters bearing mysterious devices. What was I supposed to do? I had to come up with an explanation or die.")

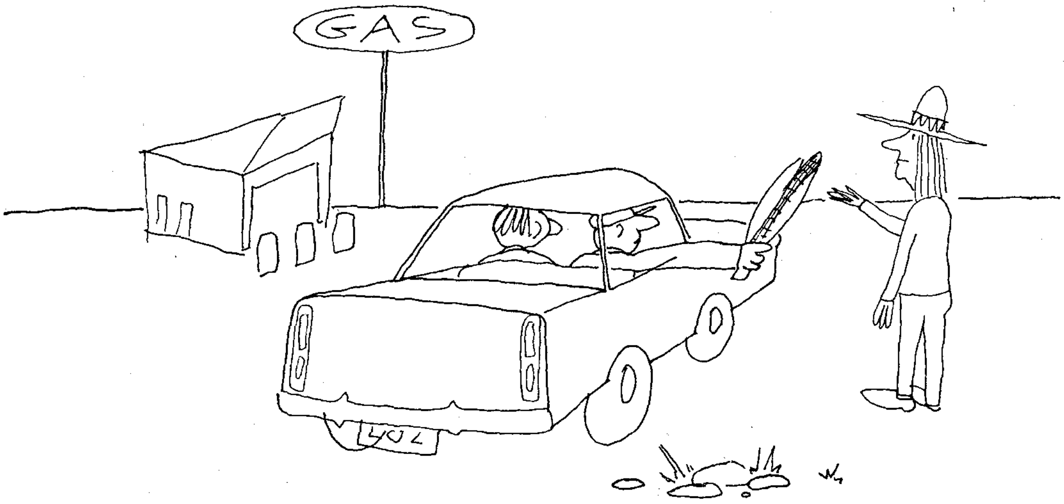
Reiner continues, "Another time, we created a family consisting of a Jewish mother, a black father, and a homosexual son. Mel was playing all three parts when I threw him a curve. 'Tell me,' I said, 'why is your son white-haired when you are not?' He answered as the mother. 'I told him always to stay inside the building,' he said, 'because it's full of Jews. One day, he went out and saw a whole bunch of Gentiles on the next block and his hair turned white overnight. It was his own fault. He should have stayed indoors.' Sometimes, if a party went on late, Mel would get punchy and forget the name of the character I'd given him. Once, I said, 'Here is Irving Schwartz, author of the best-selling novel "Up."' We developed that for ten minutes or so, and then I said, 'Your book has a very unusual jacket. It's triangular in shape.' 'I'm glad you noticed that,' he said. 'It's a one-breasted seersucker jacket. The name is on the lapel—Irving Feinberg.' 'I think you've got that wrong, sir. Your name is Irving Schwartz.' 'Wait,' he said. 'Wait till I look at my driver's license.' He pulled out his wallet, looked at the license, and reacted with shock. 'Hey!' he said. 'My name is Mr. William Faversham.' 'Well, Mr. Faversham, could you tell us how you came to write a book under the name of Schwartz?' 'I think somebody stole my wallet.' But if Mel had a specialty it was psychiatrists. He did dozens of them, maybe because he was in analysis himself between 1951 and 1957. When I made him a Greek psychiatrist, he said he was Dr. Corinne Corfu, the man who analyzed Socrates. And there was one amazing evening when he played eight different psychiatrists simultaneously, without getting any of them mixed up. He was never at a loss."

"Never" may be an overstatement. Mel Tolkin remembers a party at which Brooks, sans Reiner, delivered a soaringly funny monologue but could not find a satisfactory payoff line. He finally broke off in the middle of a sentence and walked out of the room. After the guests had waited for a while in expectant silence, Tolkin went out to look for him. He had gone home in self-disgust, leaving a scribbled note on a table. It read, "A Jew cries for help!"

TO FEED MY BROTHER: FOUR NAVAJO CORN ORIGIN MYTHS



Chief Andrew Real Bird discovers corn at the Grand Union.



A Navajo gets some corn from a guy.

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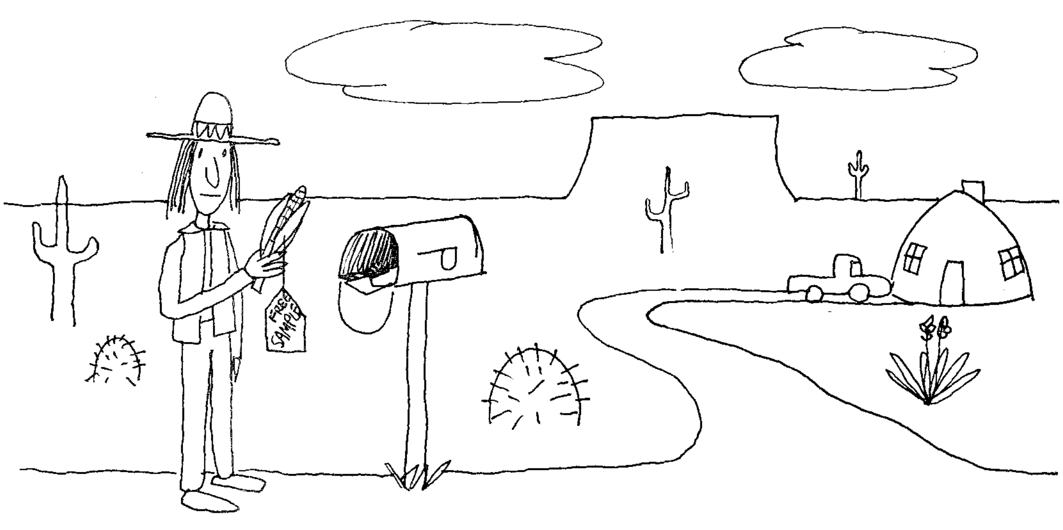
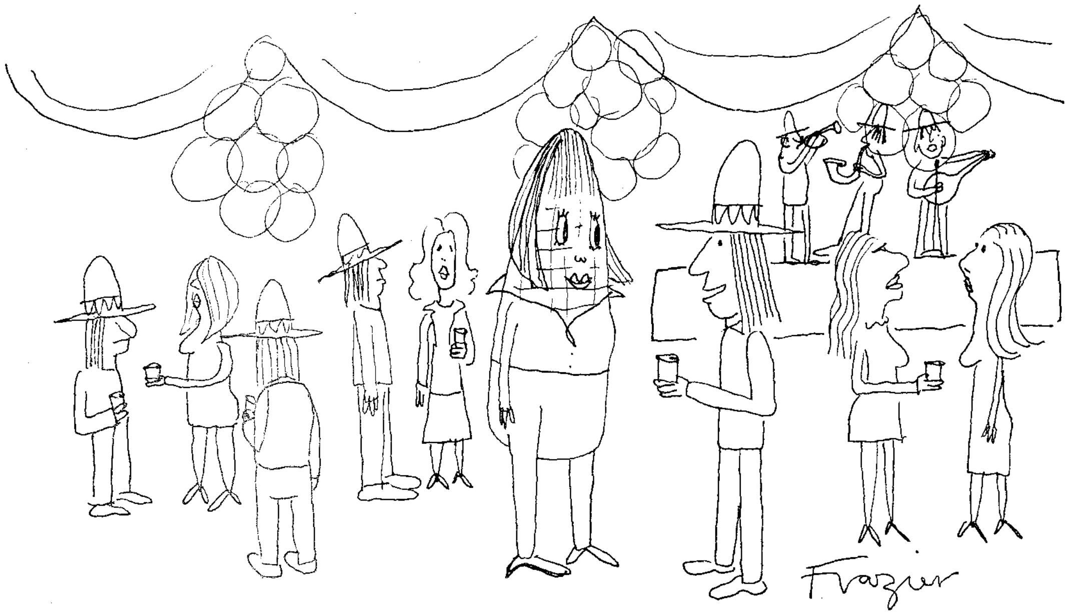


John He Throws Them in the Water receives a free sample of corn in the mail.



Isaac Six Ponies meets corn at a mixer.

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"In the fifties," Reiner says, "Mel and I performed just for fun, among friends." Around 1953, Reiner bought a tape recorder on which to preserve some of their routines. One evening, after dinner at his home in Westchester, inspiration nudged him. He turned on the machine, picked up the microphone, strolled over to where Brooks was sitting, and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are fortunate to have with us tonight a man who was present at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ." The curve had been thrown. Brooks rose to the challenge and hit it out of the park, with repercussions to which we shall return: enough, for the moment, to note that this occasion marked the birth of a comic figure indestructible in every sense of the word; namely, the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man. "The guy who gave us our entrée into the celebrity world was a well-known playwright named Joe Fields," Reiner goes on. "He heard us performing somewhere in the late fifties and invited us to eat at his apartment, along with people like Lerner and Loewe, Harold Rome, and Billy Rose. We became a sort of upper-bohemian cult. Then, in 1959, I appeared in a movie called 'Happy Anniversary,' and Mel came to the wrap party for the cast and crew at a restaurant in the Village. Moss Hart was dining with his wife on the other side of the room. Mel recognized him. All of a sudden, he got up and walked across to Hart's table and said, very loudly, 'Hello. You don't know who I am. My name is Mel Brooks. Do you know who you are? Your name is Moss Hart. Do you know what you've written? You wrote "Once in a Lifetime" with George Kaufman, and "You Can't Take It with You" and "The Man Who Came to Dinner." You wrote "Lady in the Dark" and you directed "My Fair Lady."' And he ran right through the list of Hart's credits. 'You should be more arrogant!' he shouted. 'You have earned the right to be supercilious! *Why are you letting me talk to you?*' He went ranting on like that, and Hart looked petrified. It took him quite a time to realize that Mel wasn't just a nut case. But eventually he started laughing, and everything was fine. Later on, Mel and I did one of our bits. Hart couldn't help hearing it, and that was how we got the invitation to Mamma Leone's."

In the autumn of 1959, Reiner's career was prospering, both on TV and in the cinema. As he put it to me, "I didn't need to sing for my supper anymore." Brooks's position was very different. Sid Caesar, for whom he had worked at a steeply rising salary for ten years, had been taken off the air, and Brooks was almost broke. "One day it's five thousand a week, the next day it's zilch," he said in a magazine interview long afterward. "I couldn't get a job anywhere! Comedy shows were out of style, and the next five years I averaged eighty-five dollars a week. . . . It was a terrifying nose dive." Recently, he told me, "At the time of that Random House party, I was on the brink of disaster." Even during the high-flying days with Caesar, he had been prone to recurrent fits of depression. "There were fourteen or fifteen occasions when I seriously thought of killing myself," he went on. "I even had the pills." One of his colleagues on "Your Show of Shows" recalls how Brooks snapped out of a particularly black mood by grabbing a straw hat and cane and ad-libbing a peppy, up-tempo number that ended:

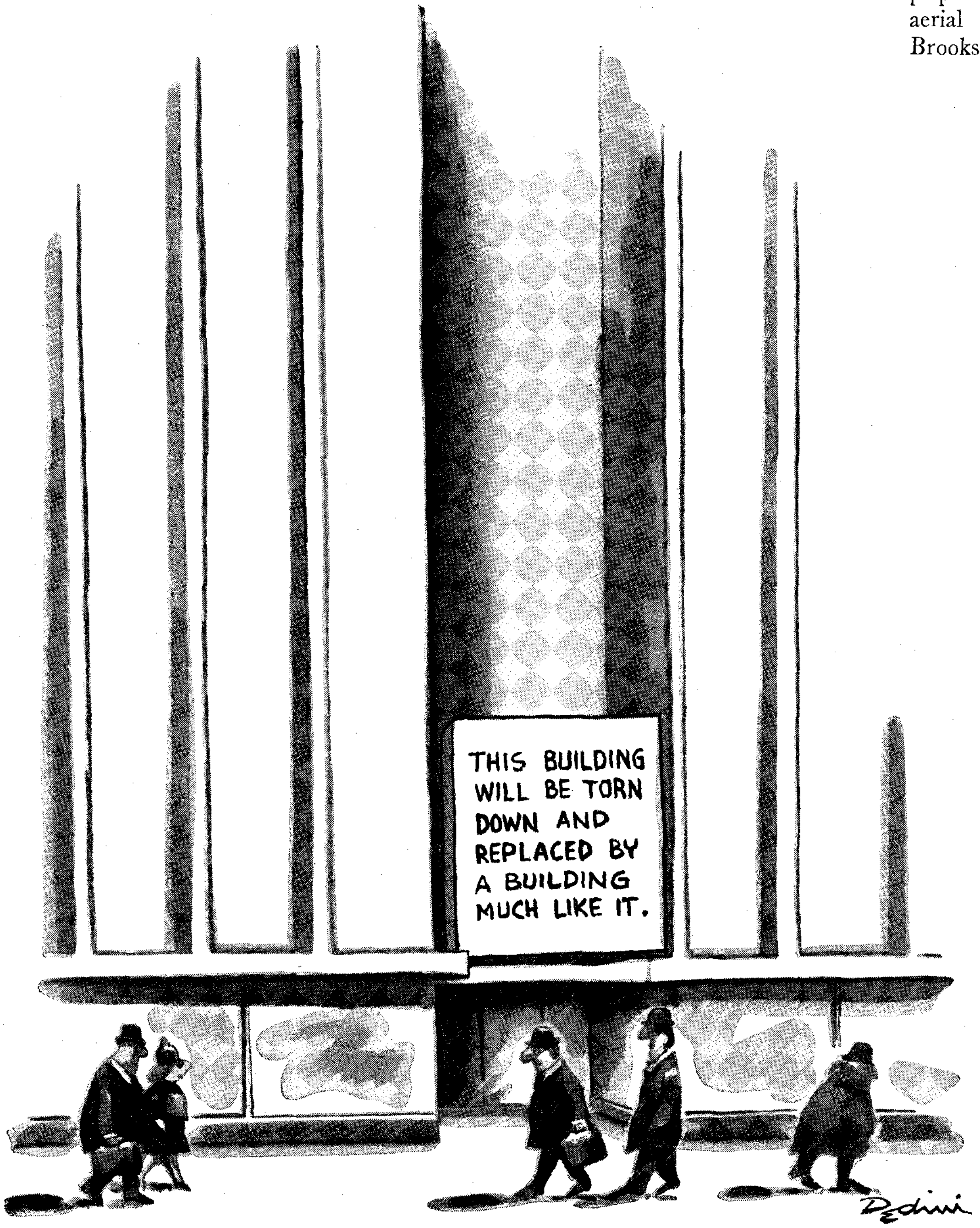
Life may be rotten today, folks,
But I take it all in stride,
'Cause tomorrow I'm on my way, folks—
I'm committing suicide!

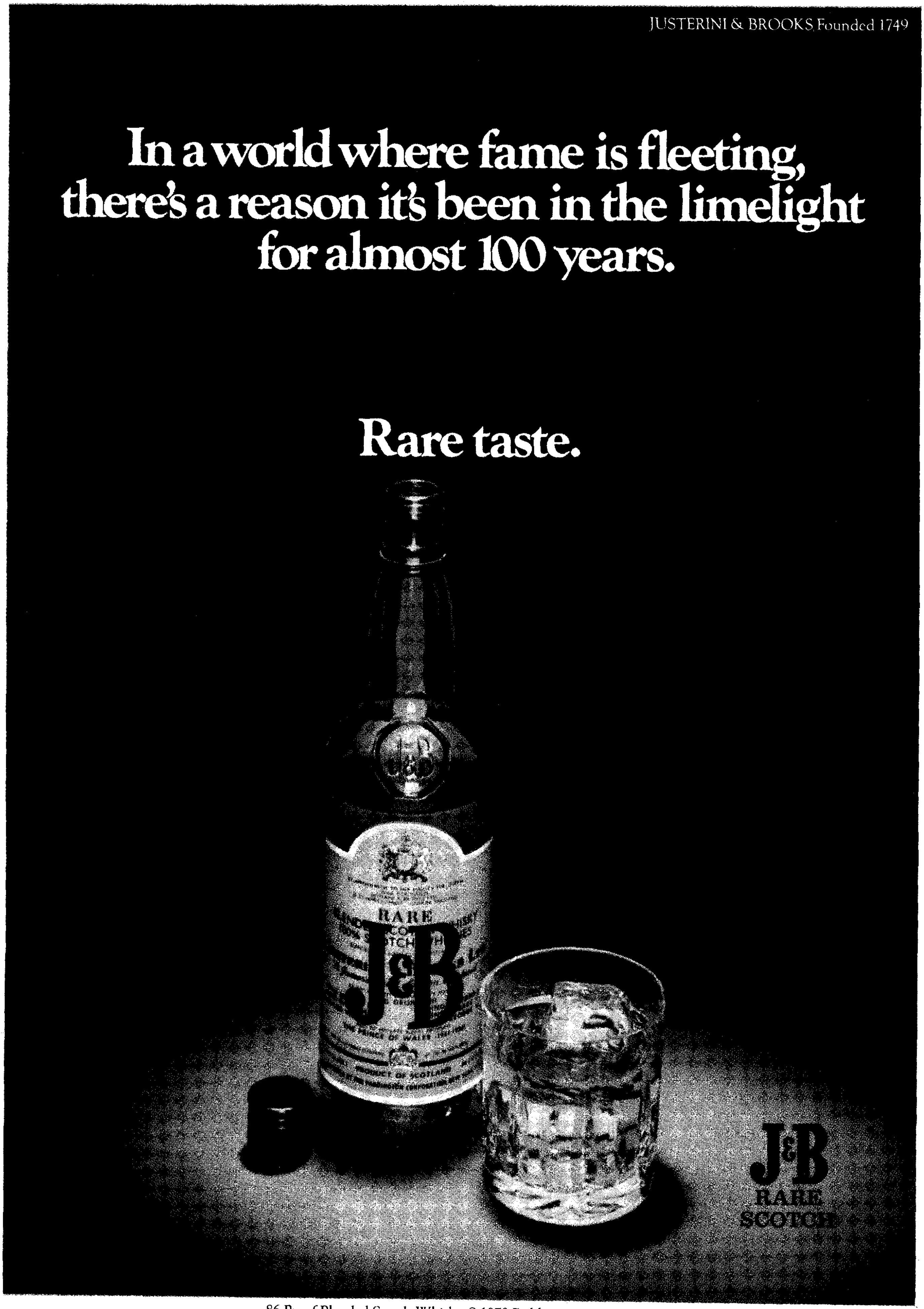
MAMMA LEONE's gave me my first sight of Brooks in performance. My last (to date) took place in the summer of 1977, when he was shooting his Hitchcockian comedy "High Anxiety." In the intervening eighteen years, and most drastically in the last three of them, his life had changed beyond recognition. A trio of successive hits—"Blazing Saddles," "Young Frankenstein," and "Silent Movie"—had made him a millionaire. In December, 1976, the exhibitors of America had placed him fifth on their annual list of the twenty-five stars who exert the greatest box-office appeal—a fantastic achievement for a middle-aged man whose only starring appearance up to that time had been in a picture, "Silent Movie," that did not even require him to speak. His friend Burt Reynolds, rated sixth that year, grew accustomed to picking up the phone and hearing a jubilant voice announce, "Hello, Six, this is Five speaking." In the 1977 poll, Reynolds rose to fourth position, while Brooks slipped to seventh, but, considering that no new film by Brooks had been shown that year, it was remarkable, as he pointed out to me, that he had retained a place in the top ten. "And in 1978," he said, "I'm sure I'll be No. 5 again."

I DRAW on my journal for the following impressions of the Once and Future Five at work (and play) on "High Anxiety," a quintuple-threat Brooks movie, on which he functioned as producer, director, co-author, title-song composer, and star:

JULY 14, 1977: Arrive in Pasadena for last day of shooting. By pure but pleasing coincidence, location is named Brookside Park. Temperature ninety degrees, atmosphere smog-laden. Only performers present are Brooks, leaping around in well-cut charcoal-gray suit with vest, and large flock of trained pigeons. As at Mamma Leone's, he is playing a psychiatrist. Sequence in rehearsal is parody of "The Birds," stressing aspect of avian behavior primly ignored by Hitchcock: Pigeons pursue fleeing Brooks across park, subjecting him to bombardment of bird droppings. Spattered star seeks refuge in gardener's hut, slams door, sinks exhausted onto upturned garbage can. After momentary respite, lone white plop hits lapel, harbinger of redoubled aerial assault through hole in roof. Brooks's hundred-yard dash is covered by tracking camera, while gray-haired technicians atop motorized crane mounted on truck squirt bird excreta—simulated by mayonnaise and chopped spinach—from height of thirty feet. Barry Levinson, one of four collaborators on screenplay, observes to me, "We have enough equipment here to put a man on the moon, and it's all being used to put bird droppings on Brooks." After each of numerous trial runs and takes, pigeons obediently return to their cages, putty in the hands of their trainer—"the same bird wrangler," publicity man tells me, "who was employed by Hitchcock himself." Find manic energy of Brooks, now fifty-one years old, awesome: by the time shot is satisfactorily in can, he will have sprinted, in this depleting heat, at least a mile, without loss of breath, ebullience, or directorial objectivity, and without taking a moment's break.

Each take is simultaneously recorded on videotape and instantly played back on TV screen—a technique pioneered by Jerry Lewis—to be scrutinized by Brooks, along with his fellow-authors, Levinson, Rudy DeLuca, and Ron Clark, who make comments ranging from condign approval to barbed derision. Dispelling myth that he is mega-





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"I think you're in luck. Every day from two to three, he lets his heart rule his head."

lomaniac, Brooks listens persuadably to their suggestions, many of which he carries out. The writers, receiving extra pay as consultants, have been with him throughout shooting, except for three weeks when they went on strike for more money. Brooks coaxed them back by giving up part of his own share of profits not only of "High Anxiety" but of "Silent Movie," on which he worked with the same three authors. Main purpose of their presence is not to rewrite—hardly a line has been changed or cut—but to offer pragmatic advice. In addition, they all play supporting roles in picture. Later, as also happened on "Silent Movie," they will view first assembly of footage and help Brooks with process of reducing it to rough-cut form. "Having us around keeps Mel on his toes," Levinson explains to me. "He likes to have constant feedback, and he knows we won't flatter him." All of which deals telling blow to already obsolescent *auteur* theory, whereby film is seen as springing fully armed from mind of director. Good to find Brooks, who reveres writers, giving them place in sun: he has often said that he became a director primarily in self-defense, to "protect my vision"—i.e., the script as written. "There's been no interference from the front office," Levinson continues as Brooks trudges back to his mark for yet another charge through cloudburst of salad dressing. "Nobody from Fox has even come to see us. Mel has free rein. Jerry Lewis once had that kind of liberty, but who has it now? Only Mel and, I guess, Woody Allen."

Am reminded of remark made to me by Allen a few days earlier: "In America, people who do comedy are traditionally left alone. The studios feel we're on a wavelength that's alien to them. They believe we have access to some secret formula that they don't. With drama, it's different. Everybody thinks he's an expert."

Writers and camera crew gather round tree-shaded monitor to watch replay of latest take. Smothered in synthetic ordure, star bustles over to join them:

BROOKS: I stare at life through fields of mayonnaise. (*Wipes eyes with towel.*)

The take (last of twenty) is generally approved, and Brooks orders it printed. Welcoming me to location, he expresses pleasure at hearing British accent, adding, "I love the Old World. I love the courteous sound of the engines of English cabs. I also love France and good wine and good food and good homosexual production designers. I believe all production designers should have a brushstroke, a scintilla, of homosexuality, because they have to hang out with smart people." (Brooks once declared, in an interview with *Playboy*, that he loved Europe so much that he always carried a photograph of it in his wallet. "Of course," he went on, "Europe was a lot younger then. It's really not a very good picture. Europe looks much better in person." He lamented the fact that his beloved continent was forever fighting: "I'll be so happy when it finally settles down and gets married.")

Brooks's version of shower scene from "Psycho," shot several days before, now appears on monitor. An unlikely stand-in for Janet Leigh, Brooks is seen in bathrobe approaching fatal tub. Cut to closeup of feet as he daintily sheds sandals, around which robe falls to floor. Next comes rear view of Brooks, naked from head to hips, stepping into bath. Star watches himself entranced.

BROOKS (*passionately*): When people see this, I want them to say, "He may be just a small Jew, but I love him. A short little Hebrew man, but I'd follow him to the ends of the earth." I want every fag in L.A. to see it and say, "Willya *look* at that *back*?"

Before lunch break, he takes opportunity to deliver speech of thanks to assembled crew, whose reactions show that they have relished working with him.

Recall another apposite quote from Woody Allen, who said to me in tones of stunned unbelief, "I hear there's a sense of enjoyment on Mel's set. I hear the people on his movies love the experience so much that they wish it could go on forever. On my movies, they're *thrilled* when it's over."

"As you all know," Brooks begins, "you'll never get an Academy Award with me, because I make comedies." This is a recurrent gripe. Brooks feels that film comedy has never received, either from industry or from audience, respect it deserves, and he is fond of pointing out that Chaplin got his 1971

Academy Award "just for surviving," not for "The Gold Rush" or "City Lights."

Brooks (*continuing*): I want to say from my heart that you're the best crew I ever found. Of course, I didn't look that hard. But you have been the most fun, and the costliest. I wish to express my sincere hope that the next job you get is—*work.*

Over lunch, consumed at long trestle tables under trees, he recounts—between and sometimes during mouthfuls—how he visited Hitchcock to get his blessing on "High Anxiety."

Brooks: He's a very emotional man. I told him that where other people take saunas to relax, I run "The Lady Vanishes," for the sheer pleasure of it. He had tears in his eyes. I think he understood that I wasn't going to make fun of him. If the picture is a sendup, it's also an act of homage to a great artist. I'm glad I met him, because I love him. I love a lot of people that I want to meet so I can tell them about it before they get too old. Fred Astaire, for instance. And Chaplin. I've got to go to Switzerland and tell him—just a simple "Thank you," you know? [Chaplin died five months later, before this pilgrimage could be made.]

More Brooksian table talk, in response to student writing dissertation on his work:

Student: What's the best way to become a director?

Brooks: The royal road to direction used to be through the editing room. Today, my advice would be: write a few successful screenplays. Anybody can direct. There are only eleven good writers. In all of Hollywood. I can name you many, many screenwriters who have gone on to become directors. In any movie, they are the prime movers.

Student: Have you any ambition to make a straight dramatic film?

Brooks (*vehemently*): No! Why should I waste my good time making a straight dramatic film? Sydney Pollack can do that. The people who can't make you laugh can do that. Suppose I became the Jean Renoir of America. What the hell would be left for the other guys to do? I would take all their jobs away. It would be very unfair of me.

Student: In other words, "Shoemaker, stick to your last"?

Brooks: Yes. And in Hollywood you're only as good as your last last.

Student: But don't you want to surprise your audience?

Brooks: Sure. Every time. I gave them "Blazing Saddles," a Jewish Western with a black hero, and that was a megahit. Then I gave them a delicate and private film, "Young Frankenstein," and that was a hit. Then I made "Silent Movie," which I thought was a brave and experimental departure. It turned out to be another Mel Brooks hit. "High Anxiety" is the ultimate Mel Brooks movie. It has lunatic class.

Student: But what if you had a serious dramatic idea that really appealed to you? Would you—

Brooks: Listen, there are one hundred and thirty-one viable directors of drama in this country. There are only two viable directors of comedy. Because in comedy you have to do everything the people who make drama do—create plot and character and motive and so forth—and *then,* on top of *that,* be funny.

Unidentified Bearded Man: Have you ever thought of being funny onstage?

Brooks: No, because I might become this white-belted, white-shoed, maroon-mohair-jacketed type who goes to Vegas and sprays Jew-jokes all over the audience. A few years of that and I might end up going to England, like George Raft or Dane Clark, wearing trenchcoats in B movies.

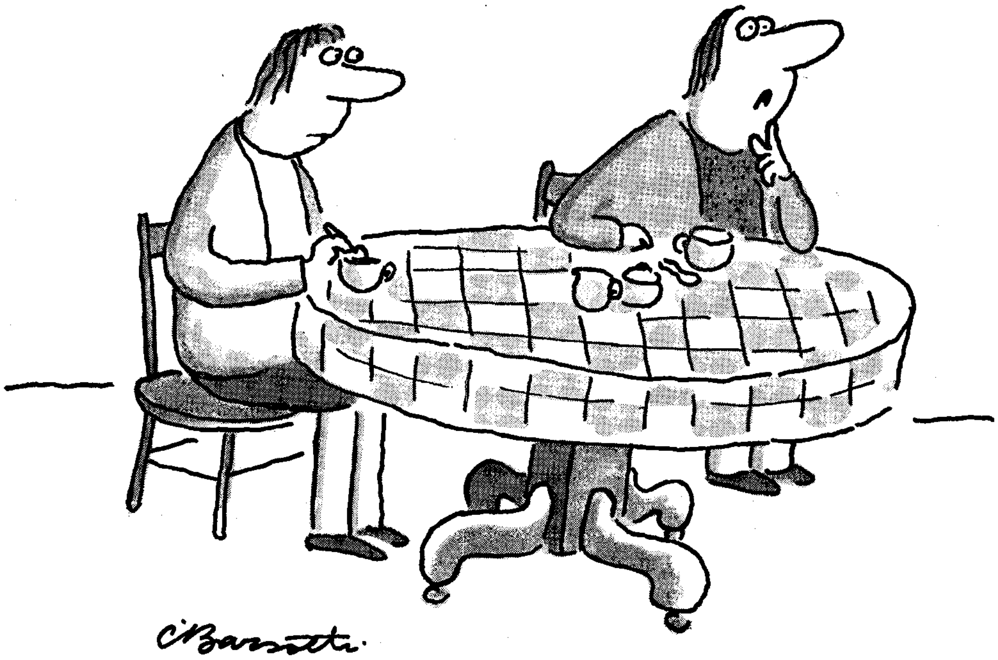
Debate ensues about differences (in style and personality) between Brooks and the other "viable director of comedy," Woody Allen. Both are New York Jewish, both wrote for Sid Caesar, both are hypochondriacs, much influenced by time spent in analysis. There is general agreement at table on obvious distinction—that Brooks is extrovert and Allen introvert.

Barry Levinson: They're total opposites. Mel is a peasant type. His films deal with basic wants and greeds, like power and money. Woody's films are about inadequacies—especially sexual inadequacy—and frailty and vulnerability. Also, like Chaplin, Woody is his own vehicle. His movies are like episodes from an autobiography. You couldn't say that about Mel.

Howard Rothberg (*slim, dark-haired young man, who has been Brooks's personal manager since 1975*): The big difference is that Mel's appeal is more universal. "Blazing Saddles" grossed thirty-five million domestically, and "Silent Movie" is already up to twenty million. Woody, on the other hand, appeals to a cult. I love his pictures, but they have a box-office ceiling. They don't go through the roof.

Brooks (*who has been wolfing cannelloni, followed by ice cream*): No matter how much "High Anxiety" grosses, it won't give me one more iota of freedom. I have the freedom right now to do anything I want. My contract is with the public—to entertain them, not just to make money out of them. I went into show business to make a noise, to *pronounce myself.* I want to go on making the loudest noise to the most people. If I can't do that, I'm not going to make a quiet, exquisite noise for a cabal of cognoscenti.

This is Brooks the blusterer speaking, the unabashed attention-craver who started out as a teen-age timpanist and is still metaphorically beating his



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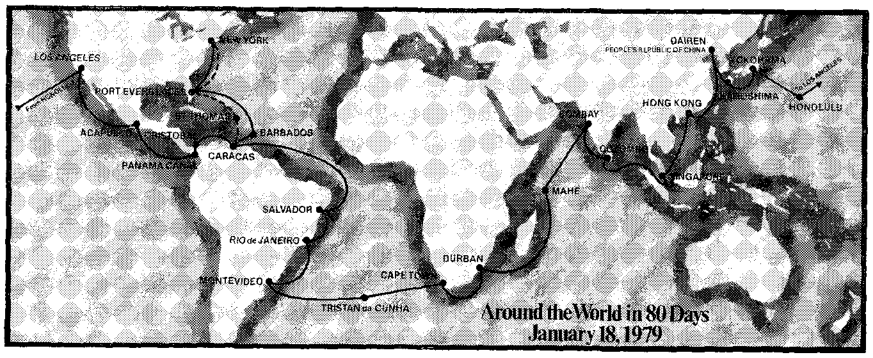
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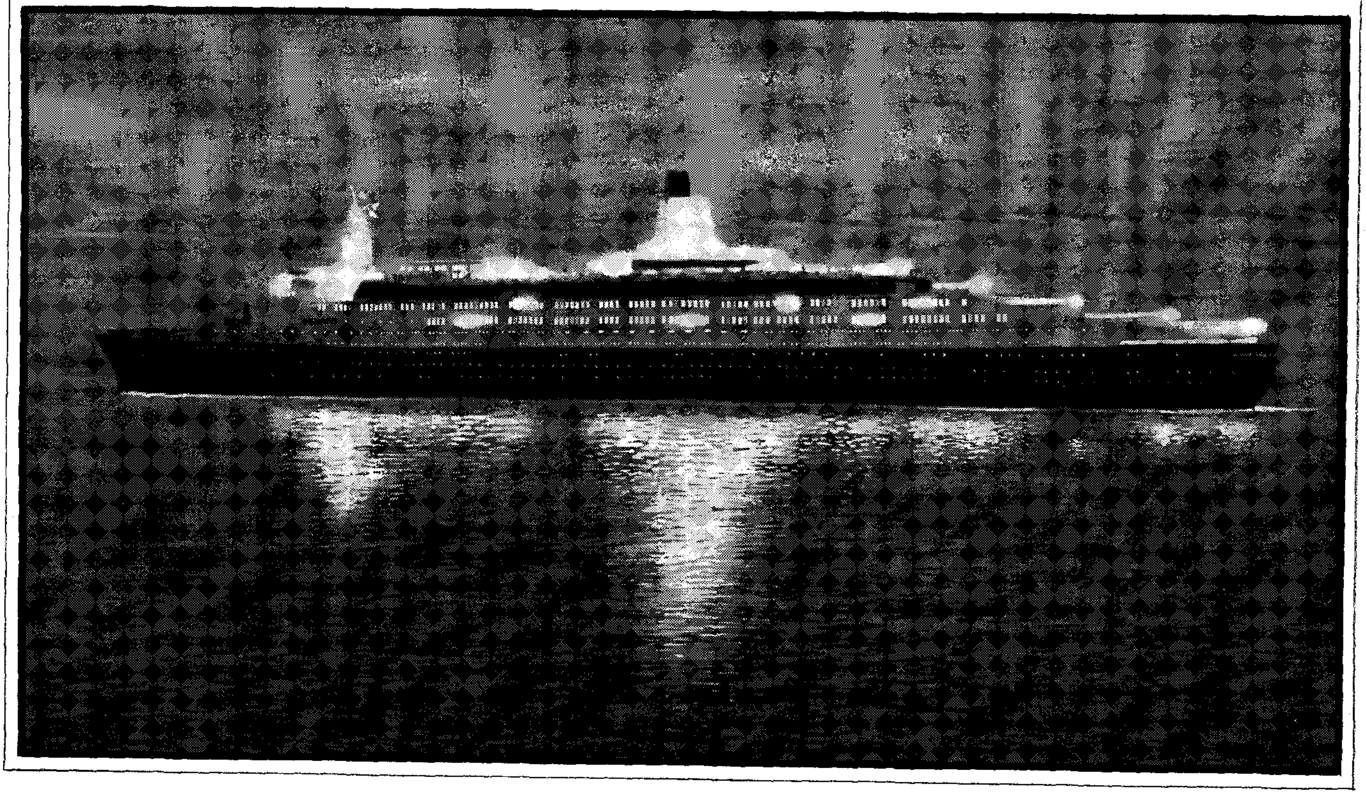

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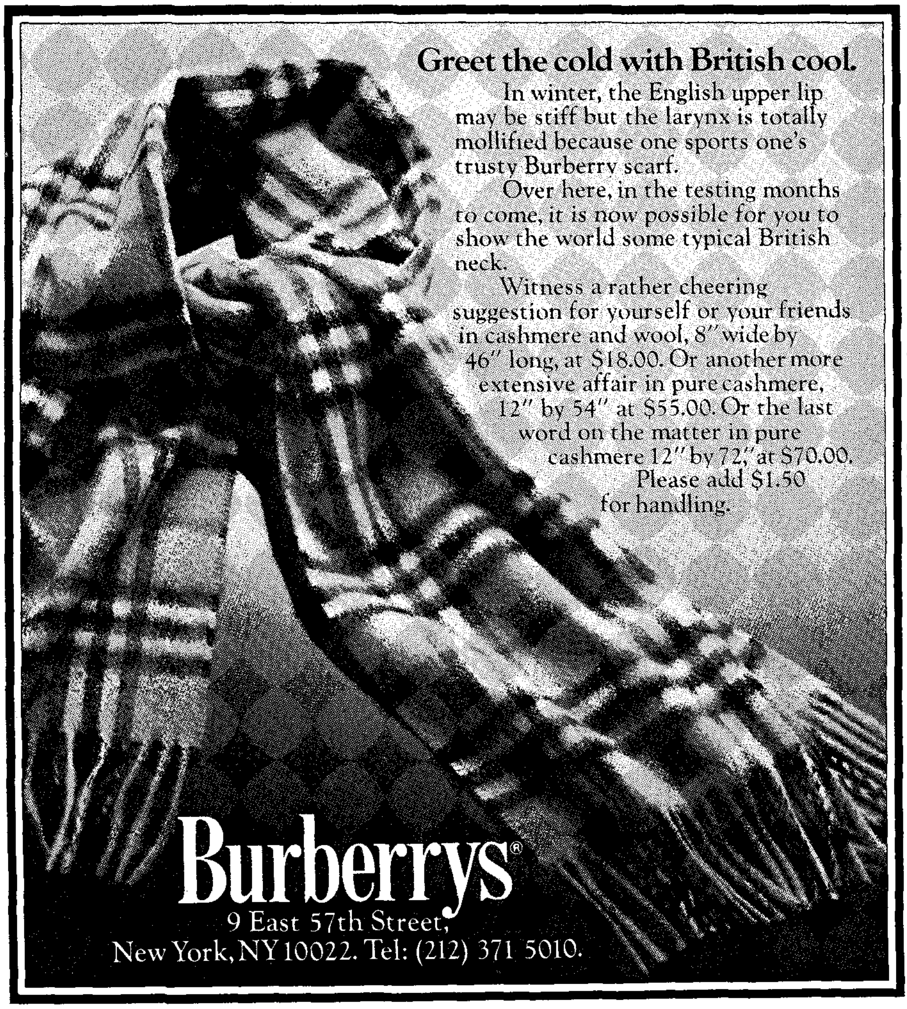

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drum. Can testify that drummer has alter ego, frequently silenced by the din: Brooks the secret connoisseur, worshipper of good writing, and expert on the Russian classics, with special reference to Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevski, and Tolstoy. Is it possible that—to adapt famous aphorism by Cyril Connolly—inside every Mel Brooks a Woody Allen is wildly signalling to be let out?

STUDENT: I think your films are somehow more benevolent and affirmative than Woody Allen's.

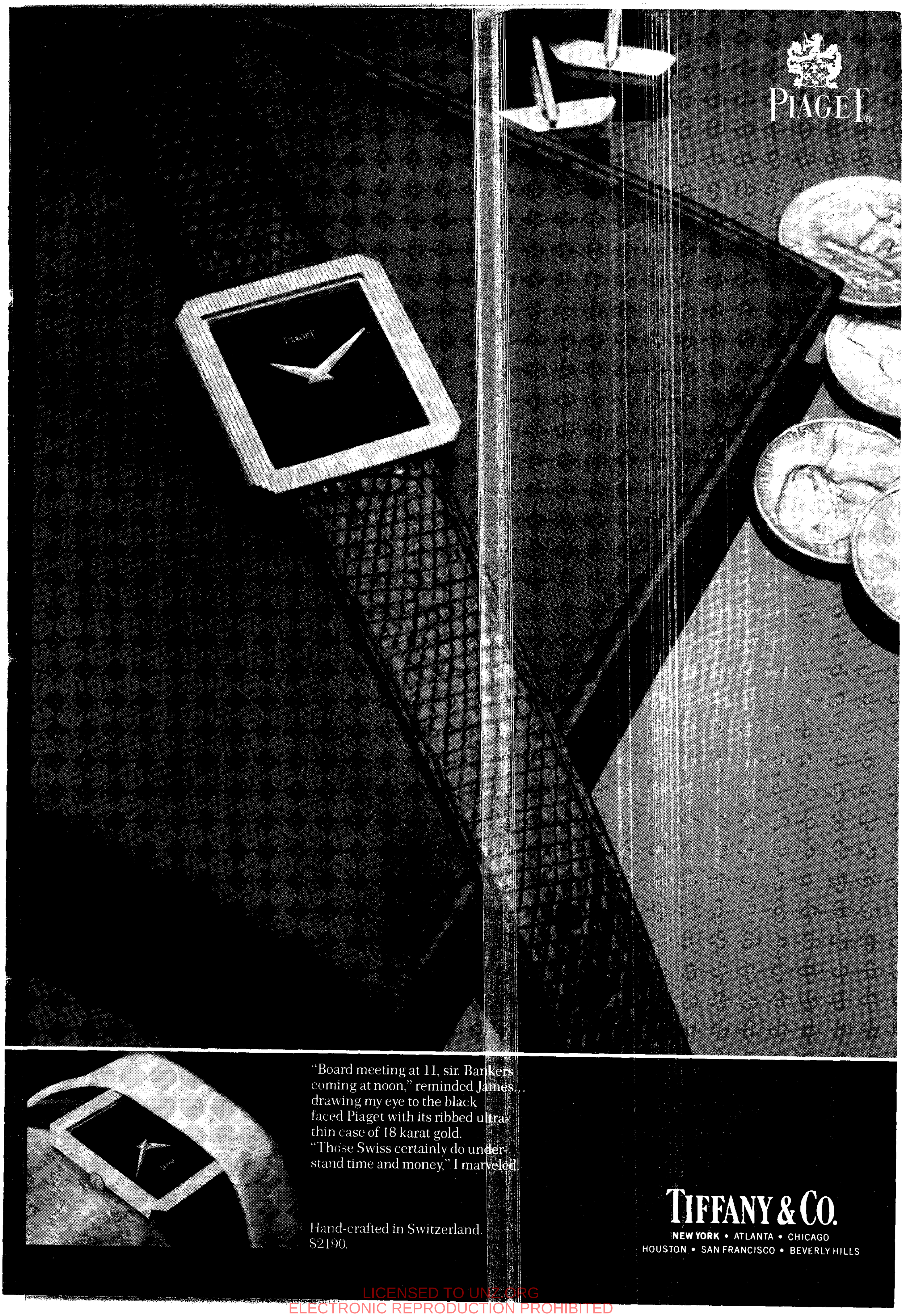
BROOKS: Let's say I'm beneficent. I produce beneficial things. A psychiatrist once told me he thought my psyche was basically very healthy, because it led to *product*. He said I was like a great creature that gave beef or milk. I'm munificent. I definitely feel kingly. Same kind of Jew as Napoleon.

STUDENT: Napoleon was Jewish?

BROOKS: Could have been. He was short enough. Also, he was very nervous and couldn't keep his hands steady. That's why he always kept them under his lapels. I put him in one of my records. [Fans will remember how the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man took a summer cottage on Elba, where he met the exiled Emperor on the beach—"a shrimp, used to go down by the water and cry"—without at first realizing who he was: "Fellow in a bathing suit, how did I know? There was no place to put his hands."] Anyway, there's something disgustingly egotistical about me. I never truly felt inferior. I never developed small defenses. I never ran scared. Even in comedy, you don't want your hero to be a coward. You want him to go forth and give combat, which is what I do in "High Anxiety." Now, Woody makes Fellini-ish, Truffaut-ish films. He starts out with the idea of making art. He feels that his art is his life. And more power to him. The difference is that if someone wants to call my movies art or crap, I don't mind.

Detect, once more, sound of obsessive drum-beating; last sentence, in particular, seems intended to convince drummer himself as much as anyone else. Conversation breaks off as Brooks returns to work. Hear him in distance inviting youthful assistant to take over direction of brief scene in gardener's hut, already rehearsed, where star is deluged anew with bird droppings—"a job," he graciously declares to the grinning apprentice, "fully commensurate with your latent talents."

Finishing my coffee, I mull over recent conversation with Gene Wilder, who has been directed thrice by Brooks



"Board meeting at 11, sir. Bankers coming at noon," reminded James... drawing my eye to the black faced Piaget with its ribbed ultra-thin case of 18 karat gold. "Those Swiss certainly do understand time and money," I marveled.

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(in "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles," and "Young Frankenstein") and once by Allen (in "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex but Were Afraid to Ask"). According to Wilder: "Working with Woody is what it must be like to work with Ingmar Bergman. It's all very hushed. You and I are talking quietly now, but if we were on Woody's set someone would already have told us to keep our voices down. He said three things to me while we were shooting—'You know where to get tea and coffee?' and 'You know where to get lunch?' and 'Shall I see you tomorrow?' Oh, and there was one other thing—'If you don't like any of these lines, change them.' Mel would never say that. The way Woody makes a movie, it's as if he were lighting ten thousand safety matches to illuminate a city. Each one of them is a little epiphany, topical, ethnic, or political. What Mel wants to do is set off atom bombs of laughter. Woody will take a bow and arrow or a hunting rifle and aim it at small, precise targets. Mel grabs a shotgun, loads it with fifty pellets, and points it in the general direction of one enormous target. Out of fifty, he'll score at least six or seven huge bull's-eyes, and those are what people always remember about his films. He can synthesize what audiences all over the world are feeling, and suddenly, at the right moment, blurt it out. He'll take a universal and crystallize it. Sometimes he's vulgar and unbalanced, but when those seven shots hit that target I know that that little maniac is a genius. A loud kind of Jewish genius—maybe that's as close as you can get to defining him."

This reminds me of something that was written in 1974 by the critic Andrew Sarris:

> Allen's filmmaking is more cerebral, and Brooks's more intuitive. In a strange way, Brooks is more likable than Allen. Thus, even when Allen tries to do the right thing, he seems very narrowly self-centred, whereas even when Mel Brooks surrenders to the most cynical calculations—as he does so often in *Blazing Saddles*—he still spills over with emotional generosity.... What Allen lacks is the reckless abandon and careless rapture of Brooks.

Reflect that this positive judgment is not necessarily incompatible with negative opinion I lately heard from former colleague of Brooks; viz., "Woody has become a professional, whereas Mel is still a brilliant amateur. Amateurs are people putting on parties with multimillion-dollar budgets."

Return to set, where, after nearly twelve weeks' shooting, current party

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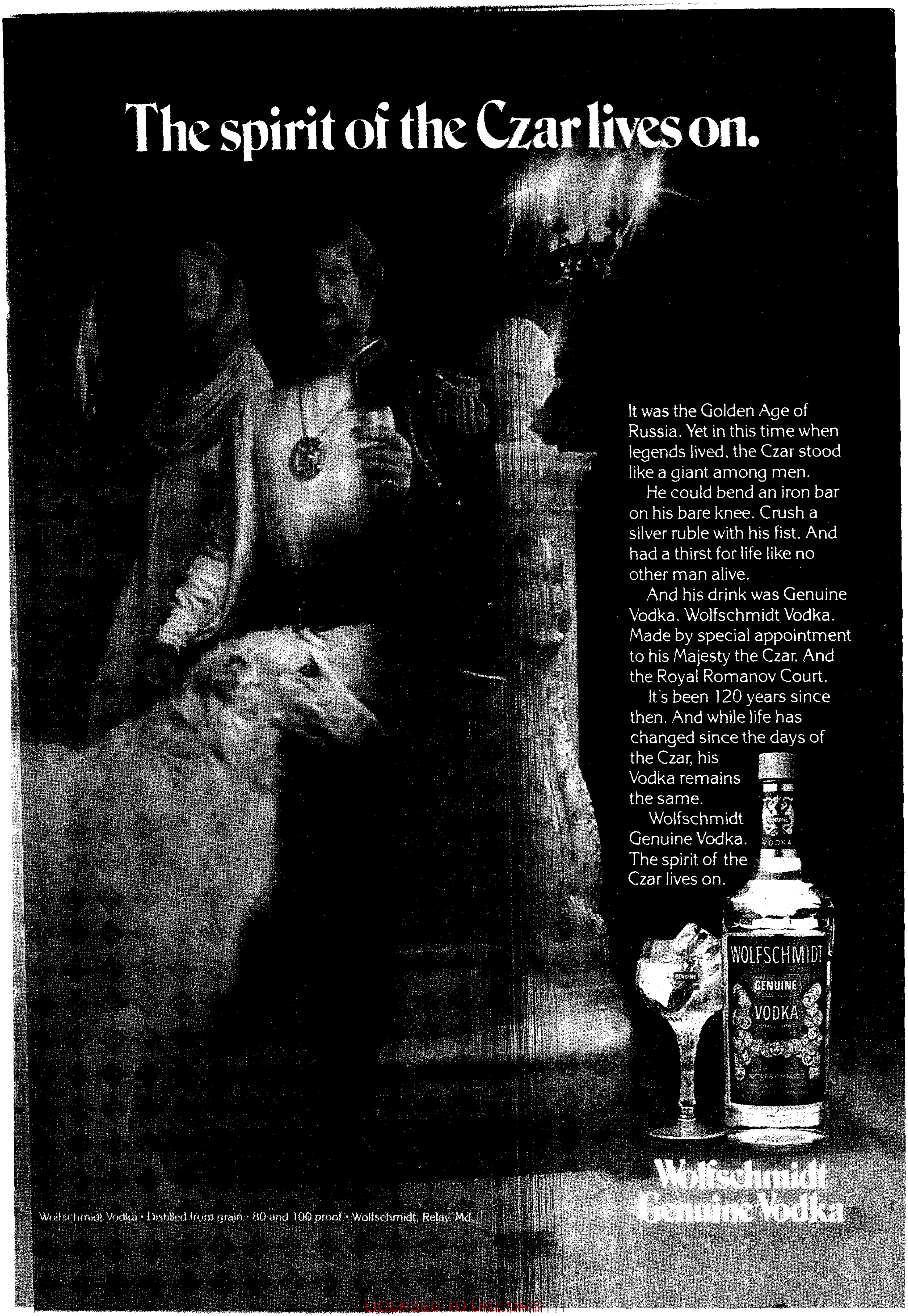
is over. Brooks has brought in picture—budgeted at four million dollars—four days ahead of schedule. Though in buoyant mood, he expresses horror at rocketing cost of filmmaking: "One actor and a few birds, but I'll bet you this has been a twenty-thousand-dollar day." (Studio accounting department afterward confirms that he would have won his bet.) I take my leave. Brooks clicks heels and bows, saying, "Your obedient Jew." He misses no opportunity to brandish his Jewishness, which he uses less as a weapon than as a shield. Remember—he seems to be pleading—that I must be liked, because it is nowadays forbidden to dislike a Jew.

Manager Rothberg accompanies me to parking lot, explaining how much success of movie means to Brooks. I suggest that surely he can afford to make a flop. "Financially, he can," Rothberg says. "Psychologically, he can't."

August 31, 1977: "My beloved, you are guinea pigs." It is a balmy evening seven weeks later, and Brooks is introducing first showing of rough cut to audience of two hundred (including workers on picture, their friends and relations, and minor studio employees such as waiters, cleaners, and parking attendants) who have crowded into private theatre at Fox. He continues, "There are children present. Some of them may be mine, so I'm not going to do the filthy speech that is customary on these occasions. For the nonce, by which I mean no offense, this movie is called 'High Anxiety,' a phrase that I hope will enter common parlance and become part of the argot of Americana. But what you will see tonight has no music, no sound effects, and no titles. You won't even see our swirling artwork. You will, however, see a lot of crayon lines, which I will explain for the benefit of the editor. They indicate something called opticals. This picture has one hundred and six dissolves, of which you will see *not one*. There are some other very fancy opticals that I am having processed in Cairo right now. There is also one crayon mark that should be on a men's-room wall, but we couldn't get it out in time. As you know, it's incumbent on us all to be killed in a Hitchcock movie, and you will see several people being very tastefully slaughtered. I regret to tell you that in casting four crucial roles we ran out of money, so the people who *wrote* the picture are *in* it. Finally, let me say that I wish you well, but I wish myself better."

Screening gets warm response, punctuated by applause. Brooks scampers down front and thanks audience for its attention, its laughter, and its profound awareness that "there are eighteen million Arabs surrounding two hundred and six Jews, and— no, wait, that's from some other speech, at some hospital somewhere." He then requests detailed and candid criticism: Where did movie drag? Which gags failed? Was plot clear? He listens raptly to all answers, asks other spectators for corroboration or dissent, makes careful notes of points on which action should be taken. And goes back to three and a half more months of furious work, polishing the film for a December première, so that it will qualify for the Academy Award, which, as he repeatedly, belligerently, fate-placatingly asserts, no comedy can ever win.

THE man we know as Mel Brooks was born in a Brooklyn tenement on June 28, 1926. To the question "What were you born?" when it was posed by David Susskind on a TV panel show in 1970 he replied, "George M. Cohan." (Later in the program, he admitted that he really had two diametrically opposed selves, that there were two different sides to "the strange amalgam, the marvellous pastiche that is me." Under Susskind's remorseless interrogation, he confessed, "The first side of me is Sir Anthony Eden. . . . And the other is Fred Astaire.") In reality, what he was born was Melvin Kaminsky, the youngest of four boys, whose parents were Eastern European immigrants. His father, Maximilian Kaminsky, came from Danzig, and his mother, née Kate Brookman, from Kiev. According to Brooks, one reason for the success of his collaboration with people like Carl Reiner and Mel Tolkin was that they all shared "the same background, the second-generation Russian-Ukrainian-Jewish intellectual heritage." He told Susskind



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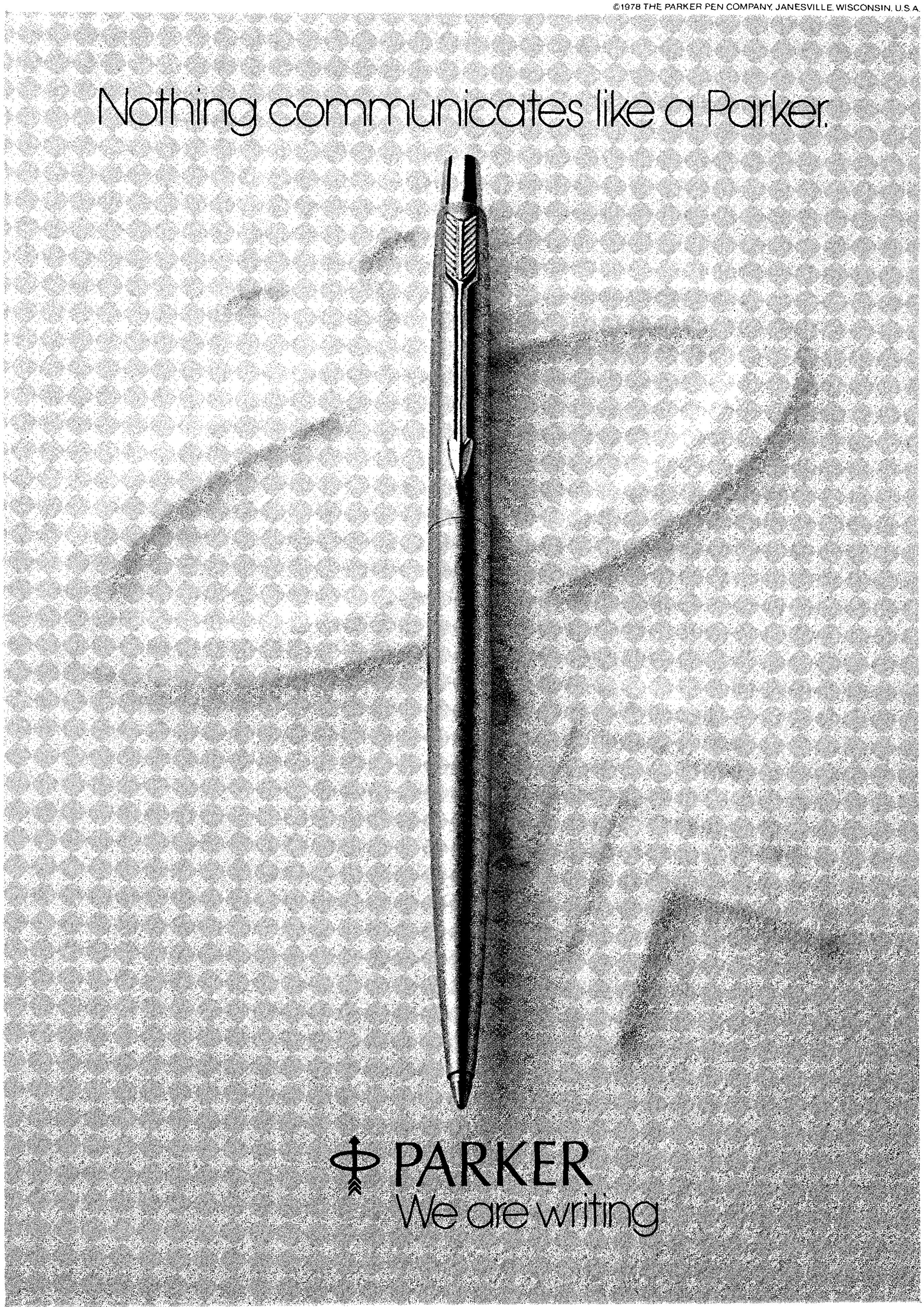
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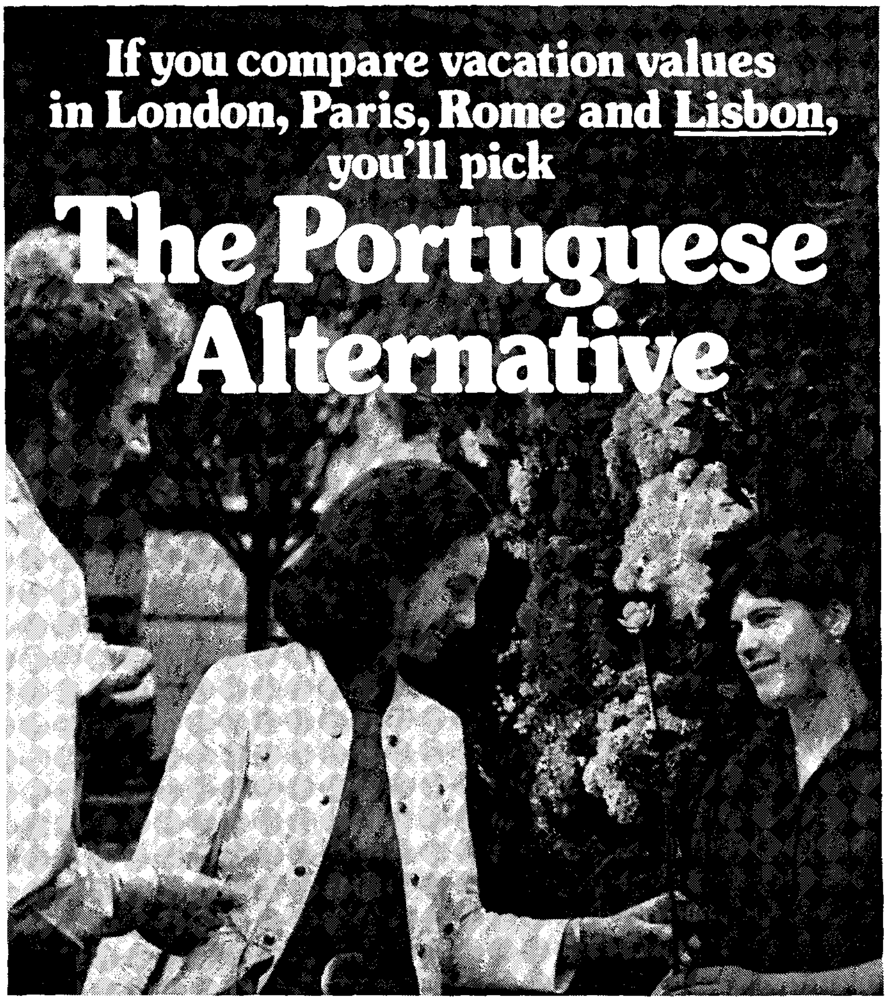
that his mother left Kiev in early childhood, never having learned Russian, and that her English was still fairly impenetrable, mainly because the voice of authority, which was what she took as her model on arrival in New York, invariably belonged to an Irish cop. The result, Brooks said, was that "she speaks no known language, and speaks it with an Irish accent."

His father, a process server, died suddenly of a kidney disease at the age of thirty-four, when Brooks was two and a half years old. The shock left him with a sense of loss that persisted into adult life. For example, he recognizes that his relationship with Sid Caesar was that of a child clamoring for the attention and approval of a father. When Brooks went into analysis, in 1951, his purpose, he recently told me, was "to learn how to be a father instead of a son." (His six years on the couch, two to four sessions per week, undoubtedly hastened the emergence of Brooks the father figure, patriarchal ruler of movie sets. "He's sometimes my mother hen, and sometimes even my brother," Gene Wilder says, "but most of the time he's my father." On a wall of Wilder's office at Fox is a photograph of the two men, inscribed "To my son Gene, with love, Daddy Mel.") Kate Kaminsky, widowed and penniless, with four boys to support, took a job in the garment district, putting in a ten-hour day and bringing home extra work in the evening. A miniature dynamo, less than five feet in height, she also found time and energy to keep her children fed, their clothes washed and mended, and their apartment in spotless trim. The roach or bedbug that entered her domain had signed its own death warrant. She exemplified what Brooks said to Susskind of Jewish mothers in general: "Until they die themselves, they *clean* and *kill*." He went on to sum up his feelings about this indomitable woman by declaiming, "If I could, I would go skinny-dipping with my mother." (Still vigorous in her eighty-third year, she nowadays lives in Florida.) Irving and Leonard, the eldest two sons, were sent out to work when they were twelve, and, on a family income that averaged about thirty-five dollars a week, ends were precariously made to meet. Mrs. Kaminsky was obsessed with the idea of preserving what Brooks describes as "a certain threshold of dignity," and for this reason she always refused to go on relief. It must be remembered that her husband died shortly before the Wall Street crash and that Brooks spent his childhood in the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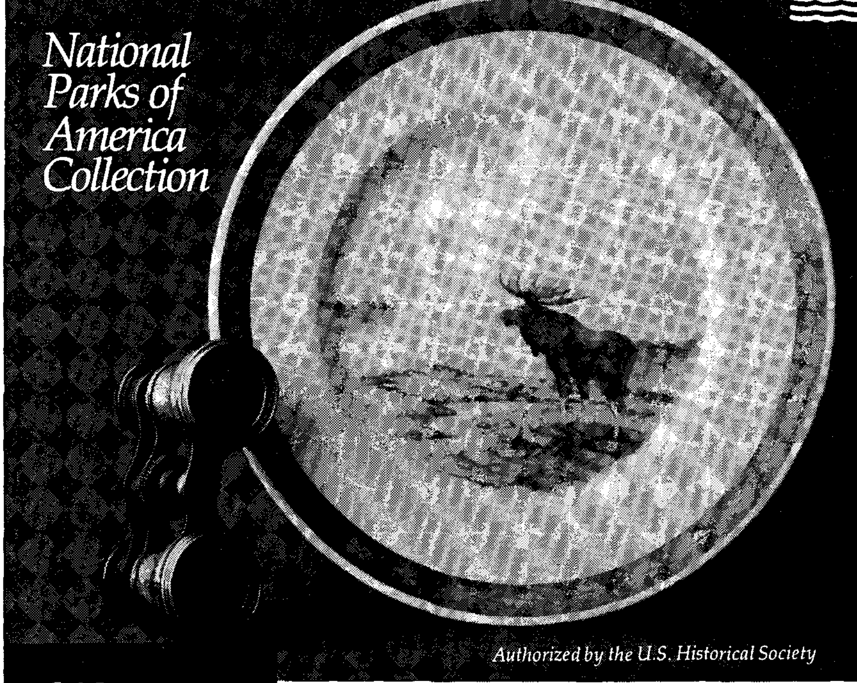

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roughest years of the Depression. To be Jewish, Brooklyn-born, fatherless, impoverished, and below average stature—no more classic recipe could be imagined for an American comedian. Or, one might suppose, for an American suicide.

Not long ago, discussing Brooks with a prosperous Jewish movie producer, I remarked that he had once been prone to suicidal impulses. "Nonsense," the producer said. "That's self-dramatization. Jews don't kill themselves. Look at their history. They're too busy fighting to survive."

When I reported this conversation to Brooks, he said, "You were talking to a rich Jew. Poor people kill themselves, and a lot of poor people are Jews. One evening, when I was a kid, a woman jumped off the top of a building next door to where I lived. She was Jewish. And there were plenty of other Jewish suicides during the Depression." The image of that death is burned into Brooks's memory. He was playing with friends on a nearby street. Hearing screams and police sirens, he ran to see what had happened. A corpse, covered by a sheet so that only the feet were visible, was being loaded into an ambulance, and he was sure he recognized the shoes as a pair belonging to his mother. His own apartment was empty. Unknown to him, Mrs. Kaminsky was working overtime in Manhattan. The hours that passed before she returned were the worst he ever lived through.

Some revealing sidelights on Brooks's relationship with his parents are thrown by the recorded routine in which he plays a two-hour-old baby, precociously endowed with the faculty of speech. Interviewed by Carl Reiner, he declares that he already knows his mother, though he hasn't yet "seen the outside."

REINER: Do you hope that she is good-looking?
BROOKS: Oh, no, I don't care what she looks like. I'm not going to date her. I'm her child. But I know she's good. Because you can tell a person by what they are inside.... And I was there, I was inside, I looked around. She's great.... I remember when I was a little tadpole, a little fetus there, swimming around.
REINER: Do you remember having a tail?
BROOKS: Sure. Oh, that was the best part. I loved the tail.
REINER: Were you unhappy when it disappeared?
BROOKS: When I lost my tail, I got a nose.... The nose is much more important, because—you can't blow your tail, you know what I mean?

He has a simple theory to account for the attacks of queasiness that wom-

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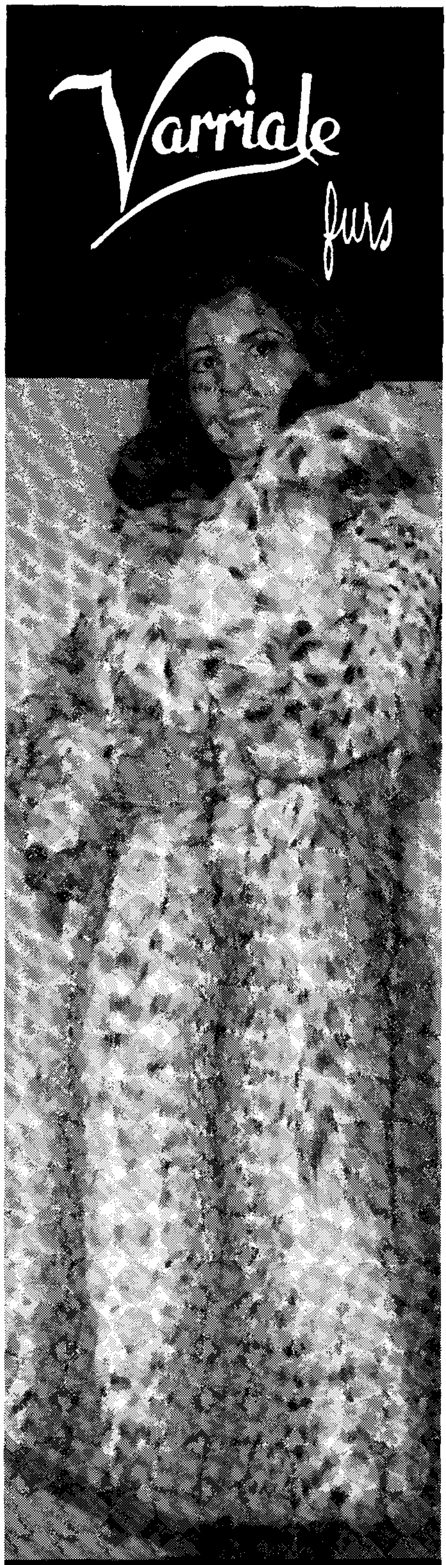

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en suffer during the early months of pregnancy:

Brooks: I think the moment they realize that there's a living creature in them, they puke.

Reiner: But why?

Brooks: Wouldn't you be nauseous if somebody was running around inside of you?... It's a frightening thing.

His knowledge of world celebrities is extremely limited. Reiner reels off a list of names including Queen Elizabeth, Winston Churchill, Fidel Castro, and Pandit Nehru, none of which means anything to him. Then:

Reiner: Have you heard of Cary Grant?

Brooks: Oh, sure.... Everybody knows Cary Grant.

Pressed by Reiner, he explains that while he was still in the womb his mother went to a lot of Cary Grant pictures, whereas she never took him to any Pandit Nehru pictures. "But I'm sure," he generously adds, "that he's a *hell* of an actor."

At one point, he leaps to the conclusion that he is a girl ("That's *adorable!*"), but Reiner gently disabuses him. "That's all right," he says, putting a bold face on it. "I'll play ball and get drunk and things. I'll be fine." He tentatively asks whether Burt Lancaster is a girl. Reiner gives him a negative answer, which seems to relieve him. "That's good," he says, reconciled at last to masculinity. "I'll be like him." It has been established earlier that Baby Brooks's linguistic skill is a freakish and short-lived gift, likely to be withdrawn at any moment. As long as the theme is his mother, he is eagerly articulate. Significantly, the withdrawal symptoms begin to appear in the following passage, when Reiner introduces a new subject.

Reiner: I'd like to know what you feel about your father.

Brooks: I feel that Dad is the kind of guy that will gah-gah-san.

Reiner: Will what? I didn't get that.

Brooks: I feel that my father will always be the kind of a guy that will take me to ballgames, and we'll be buddies, and we'll sy-ny-ny, ny-foy.

Reiner: I don't understand you.

Brooks: I think that my father and I will probably get along well together, since we're both boys. We'll probably run around and play ball and nah-nah-hah, nah-nah-hah.

Reiner: I do believe he's losing his intelligence.

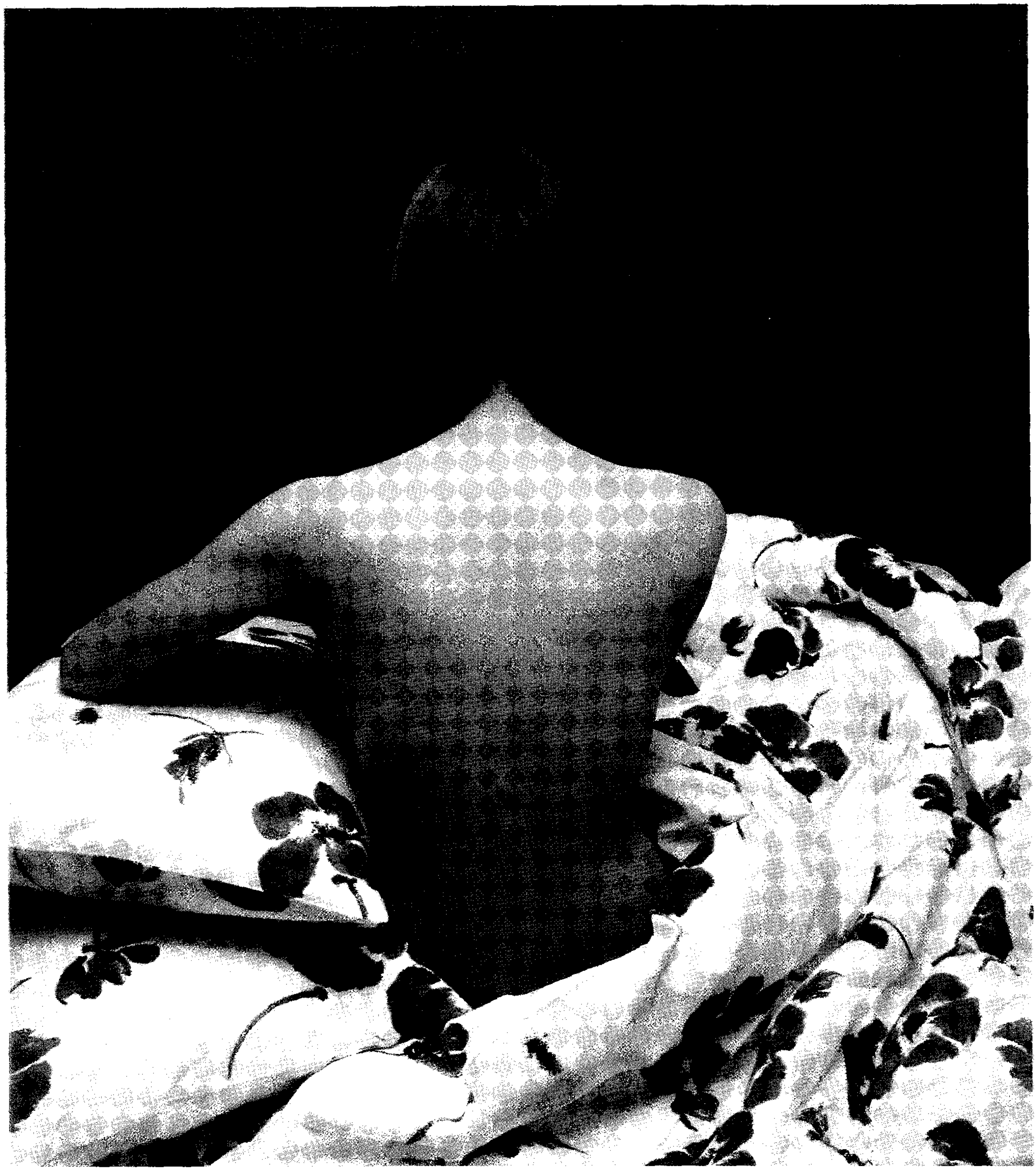
And the track ends with Brooks regressing into wailing, bawling, frantic inarticulacy. It is quite an unnerving sound. Listening to it, I recall something that an old friend of Brooks's, the novelist Joseph Heller, once said to me: "There's a side of Mel that will never be fulfilled, no matter how hard he drives himself, and it all goes back to his father's death."

At P.S. 19, Brooks was bright but unstudious—the kind of disruptive, obstreperous child that teachers slap down on principle, wearily aware that he will bounce right back up. "I wasn't an avid reader," he says. "I was always an avid talker and doer. Reading books seemed too conservative for me to bother with." He quickly established himself as the clown of the classroom. One of his favorite movies was "Frankenstein" (the 1931, James Whale version), and he discovered at the age of eight that he could reduce his closest chum, a boy called Gene Cogen, to uncontrollable hysterics by singing "Puttin' On the Ritz" in the manner of Boris Karloff. "We had *folie à deux*," Brooks told me. "It got so bad that Cogen couldn't hear that song near a window, because he might roll out and fall to his death. I would start to sing and he would collapse. He would have to be dragged to the principal's office by his feet, with his head banging on the steps, still laughing." Thus the infant Brooks achieved what every comic traditionally strives for—a knockdown, drag-out exit. (He stored up this triumph for future use: Peter Boyle performs the same routine in "Young Frankenstein.") Despite, or perhaps because of, the damage to his head, young Cogen remained a fan of Brooks's, and said to him one day, "You're going to be famous when you grow up. I know that because nobody else uses words like 'urchin' in English composition."

On the streets, where Irish, Italian, and Polish gangs roamed only a few blocks away, Brooks was funny in self-defense. He later said to a *Playboy* interviewer, "If your enemy is laughing, how can he bludgeon you to death?" Whenever it was possible, he and his pals would travel in the company of a well-built Gentile. Even today, it is an article of faith with Brooks that "every small Jew should have a tall goy for a friend, to walk with him and protect him against assault." Much of Brooks's humor, as we shall see, is inspired by fear: fear of injury, illness, sex, and failure; and also of unfriendly Gentiles, especially large ones, and most particularly if they are Germans or Cossacks. Fear, too, of predatory animals, though not, apparently, of sharks. My evidence for this is drawn from the Susskind program mentioned previously.

Susskind: Now let's talk about Jewish mothers.

David Steinberg (*another of the*



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panelists): Forget about Jewish mothers, let's talk about sharks.

BROOKS (*instantly assuming a lecturer's voice, plummy and pedantic*): A shark could never harm you. The shark is a benign creature of the sea. Of course, if you thrash about in the water or if you wear shiny bracelets, the shark will be attracted to you. On occasion, the shark has followed people out of the water and has gone to their blanket and eaten their beach ball. One time, the shark followed my brother Irving home on the Brighton local, and, upon being admitted to the apartment house, the shark entered his apartment—Apartment 4-B—and ate his entire family and a brand-new hat. Apart from that, the shark is a pussycat.

ALL the apprehensions that surface in Brooks's comedy have the same eventual source: a fear—or, to put it more positively, a hatred—of death. The noise he makes is literally death-defying. I append some Brooksian reflections on mortality, culled from various conversations over the past year.

BROOKS: The whole business of death is too formal nowadays. Bing Crosby just succumbed to the great spectre at the age of seventy-three, but the way it's covered by radio and television and newspapers it is no longer calamity. It is worded in correct obituary paragraphs and it becomes a normal and ordinary event. The good shock value is taken out of it. The moments of horrible grief over somebody's death are handled for us so that we don't experience them, and then they stay with us too long because we didn't grieve properly. The media formalize the tragedy, put a quick film of Saran Wrap over it, so that we don't feel, "My God, one of us has suddenly ceased to be," so that millions of people don't ask, "Where did Bing Crosby go?" Well, where *did* he go? Don't just tell me he died. I want to know where he went. And I want to grieve a little bit.

MYSELF: Are you scared of dying?

BROOKS: Not right now, not just this moment, because I'm feeling good, I'm not in a lot of pain. But I always ntend to be afraid of it. To pay proper respect and homage to it. When I was nine, my friend Arnold said to me that we were both going to die. I said, 'You're obviously not right, you can't be right. We're not going to die, because why were we born? It wouldn't make any sense." He said, "What about your grandfather? He died. And what about fish?" I said my grandfather was *very* old, *exceptionally* old, and fish had nothing to do with us. I thought I sounded very clever. All the

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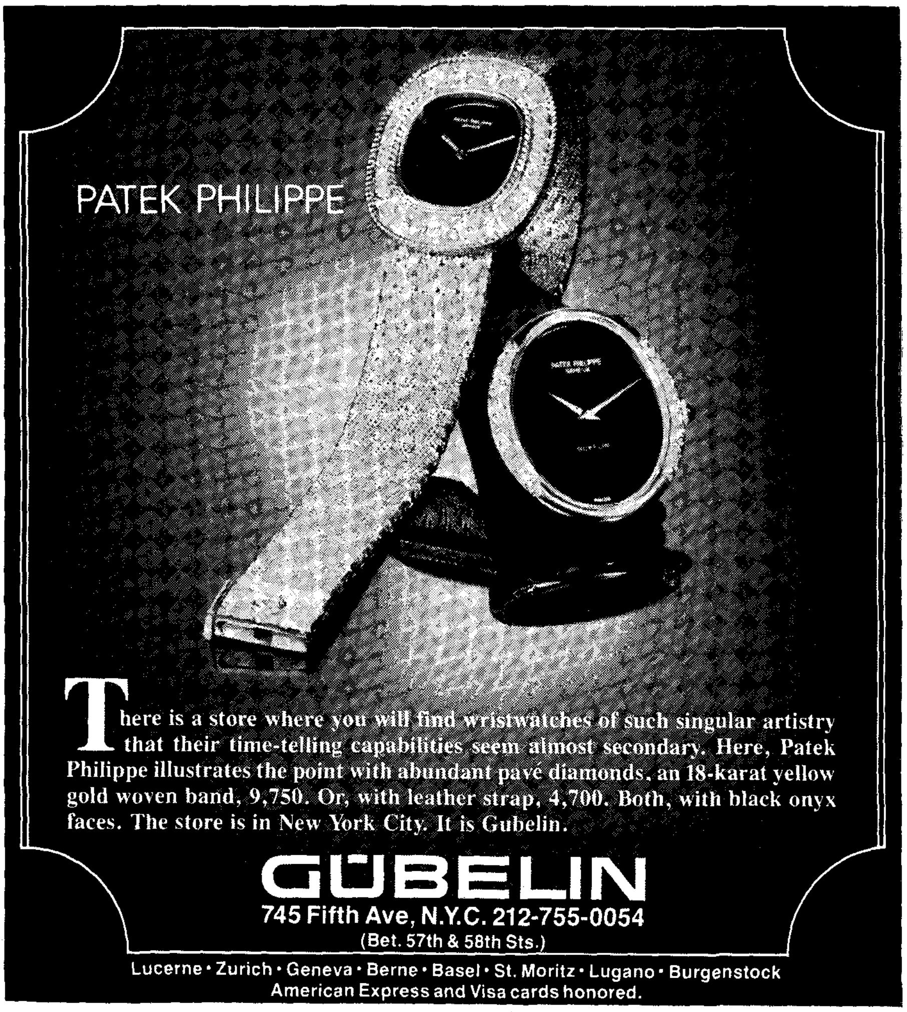

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same, that was the first time I knew I was going to die.

Again:

Myself: Do you believe in life after death?

Brooks: No, I don't. I think that's silly. And there's no Judgment Day, either. There isn't a day when we all kiss the little fishes and shake hands and walk together into God's green Heaven. So what are we doing here? My guess is that we are part of an evolving process that has no knowable purpose. What's happened is that we were given too many brains, and our brains have screwed up our biological evolution. If we didn't think so much, we'd know what it was all about. When one leaf on a tree begins to turn yellow, it doesn't turn to the other leaves and say, "Jesus Christ, all you guys are green and I'm turning yellow! What the hell is this?" They just turn yellow, and then red, and then brown, and then they leave the tree, and it's all proper. But we say, "Look at this gray hair! Look at this wrinkle! And, my God, I'm so tired after I walk up fourteen steps!" We defer far too much to our brains, our logic, our powers of rational thought. That's why we're so vain, so egotistical, so full of complaining. Leaves never complain.

Myself: You're saying that we ought to go along with the processes of nature. But science tells us that we live on a dying planet, where everything—leaves and people alike—is ultimately doomed to extinction. If that's correct, surely the best way to obey the laws of nature would be to kill ourselves now and have done with it?

Brooks: But we don't have to, because we're going to die anyway. And, because of that, let's have a merry journey, and shout about how light is good and dark is not. What we should do is not *future* ourselves so much. We should *now* ourselves more. "*Now* thyself" is more important than "*Know* thyself." Reason is what tells us to ignore the present and live in the future. So all we do is make plans. We think that somewhere there are going to be green pastures. It's crazy. Heaven is nothing but a grand, monumental instance of future. Listen, *now* is good. *Now* is wonderful. (*Catching himself on the brink of sounding pretentious, he retreats to the safety of self-mockery, and adopts the tone of a humorless pseudo-intellectual.*) By this, of course, I do not mean to intimate that I espouse a totally Sartrean position.

Myself: But you're in the movie business. You have to plan ahead.

Brooks: I only look ahead commer-

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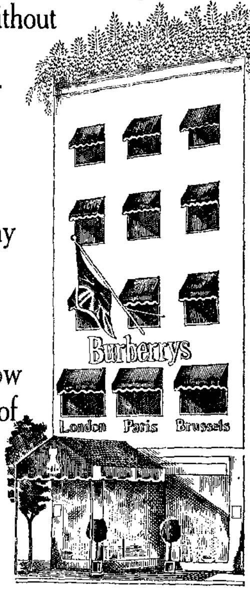

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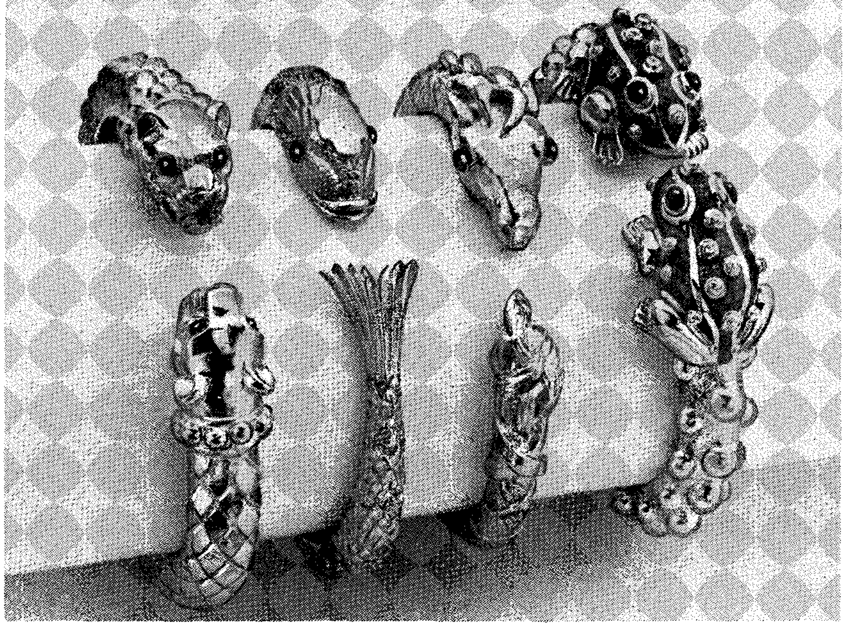

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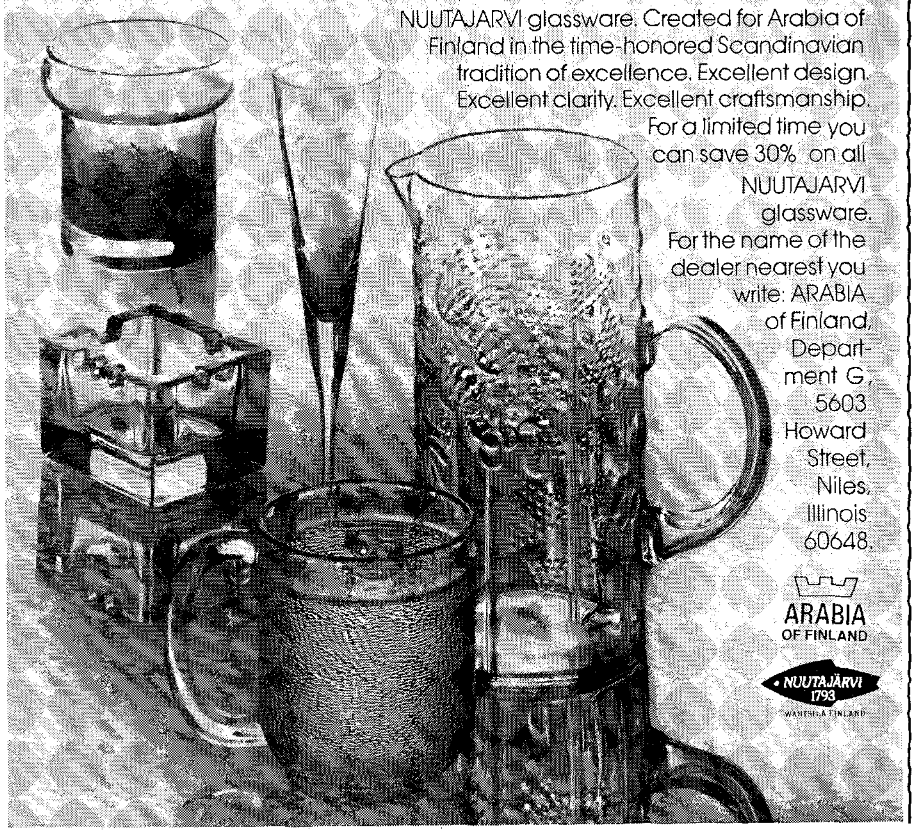

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cially. I never look ahead spiritually.

On his records with Reiner, there was no advance planning; Brooks lived entirely in the moment, wholly committed to *now.* For this reason (which we'll examine later), they may well represent his most personal comic achievements.

A final exchange with Brooks on eschatology:

MYSELF: When you're playing the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man, Reiner asks whether you and your fellow cave dwellers believed in a superior being. You answer, "Yes. A guy Phil." You used to offer up prayers to him, like "O Philip, please don't take our eyes out." Then, one day, he was struck dead by lightning. Reiner asks how you felt about that, and you say, "We looked up. We said, 'There's something bigger than Phil.' " Is there?

BROOKS: Yes. There *is* something bigger than Phil, and I'm afraid of it. That's where my standards of morality come from—fear. And not only fear of God. I know how strong *I* am, how powerful *I* can be, how aggressive *I* can get. And I don't want a world where that kind of force can be turned against me. It frightens me. That's why we've all got to behave. That's the beginning of civil behavior. Fear of ourselves.

IN 1939, the Kaminskys moved to Brighton Beach, where they shared a house a block and a half from the sea. 'It was sort of rustic out there," Brooks recalls. "We actually got to see *trees.* I loved it." One of their neighbors was Buddy Rich, Artie Shaw's new drummer, who befriended Brooks and gave him an occasional free lesson in the art of percussion. The following summer, Brooks took a vacation job as a general helper at a hotel in the Catskills, washing dishes, keeping the tennis courts clean, and yelling things like "Mrs. Weiss, your time is up!" at people in rented rowboats. The food supplied to the staff still haunts his nightmares. Of one especially feculent pie, he says, "It lay under my heart for three years. I called it Harold. I used to pat it every morning and ask it how it was—'Remember how you were when I ate you, you little devil?' " He worked out a simple comedy routine, which, as a reward for good conduct, he was occasionally allowed to perform. Clad in a black overcoat and derby hat, and toting two suitcases, the fourteen-year-old Brooks would trudge out onto the diving board. Pausing at the edge, he would suddenly scream "Business is terrible! I can't go on!" and plunge into the pool.

After two years of seaside life, Mrs. Kaminsky brought her family back to the old neighborhood; the reason, Brooks says, was that "she missed the friendships of the ghetto." He attended Eastern District High School, where he was either an all-talking, all-singing version of Harpo Marx or a major nuisance, depending on whether you were his classmate or his teacher. Through his brother Lenny, he met Don Appell, a Broadway actor who had appeared with Canada Lee in Orson Welles's 1941 production of "Native Son." Appell introduced him to the social director of a borscht-belt hotel in Ellenville. Brooks made a strong impression and was hired, for the summer season of 1942, as drummer and part-time *tummler*. Two quotations from Brooks may here be helpful. (1) To *Playboy:* "Jews don't do comedy in winter. In summer, all right." (2) To me: "A *tummler* can be defined as a resident offstage entertainer at a Jewish mountain resort, mostly after lunch." He found it hard to decide on a professional name. Melvin Kaminsky was too overtly Jewish for a comedian. David Daniel Kaminsky, also of Brooklyn but unrelated to Brooks, had faced much the same problem a decade or so earlier, and had solved it by billing himself as Danny Kaye. (Just why Jews in the performing arts were—and, for the most part, still are—expected to Anglicize their names is a question worthy of a separate study. To take three cases at random, is it to simplify pronunciation, to enhance euphony, or to disarm bigotry that Emanuel Goldenberg becomes Edward G. Robinson, Benny Kubelsky becomes Jack Benny, and Isadore Demsky becomes Kirk Douglas? The whole rigmarole discredits the public that demands it.) Brooks's first thought was to borrow his mother's maiden name, but Melvin Brookman turned out to be a non-starter, because, he told me, "I couldn't get it all on my drum." Chopping off a syllable, he settled for Melvin Brooks.

That summer, two events occurred that helped to lay down the course of his future career. In the band at the Avon Lodge, a nearby Catskill pleasure dome, there was a pretty good saxophone player called Sid Caesar. Brooks met him in off-duty hours, howled at his mimetic gifts, and formed a friendship that was renewed, to the lasting gratitude of TV audiences, after the war. The other significant event took place back in Ellenville. It

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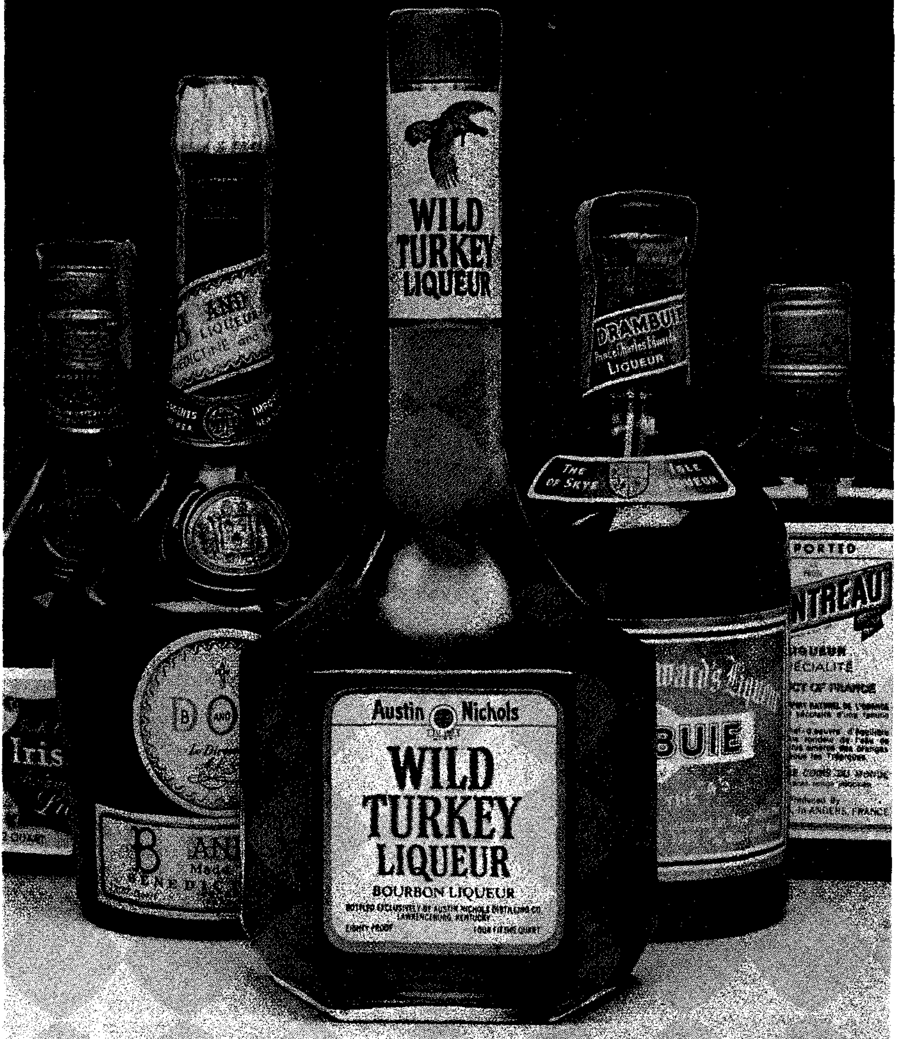

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was a classic demonstration of the First Show-Biz Law of Psychokinetics, according to which major talent, if unfulfilled, acquires the power of temporarily disabling minor talent that comes within its sphere of influence and impedes its development. One morning, in obedience to this law, the regular stand-up comic fell mysteriously sick and had to be shipped back to New York. Brooks, inevitably, was asked to replace him. He went on that night and improvised, using real characters—the manager, staff, and clientele of the hotel—as his points of departure into fantasy. He also found time to prepare a short blackout spot, for which he co-opted a girl assistant. "It was entitled 'S. and M.,' thirty years before anyone had heard of S. and M.," he told me. "The girl and I walked out from the wings and met in the center of the stage. I said, 'I am a masochist.' She said, 'I am a sadist.' I said, 'Hit me,' and she hit me, very hard, right in the face. And I said, 'Wait a minute, wait a minute, hold it. I think I'm a sadist.' Blackout. That was the first sketch I ever wrote." Within a few days, he had composed his own theme song, the climax of which was a rousing plea for sympathy:

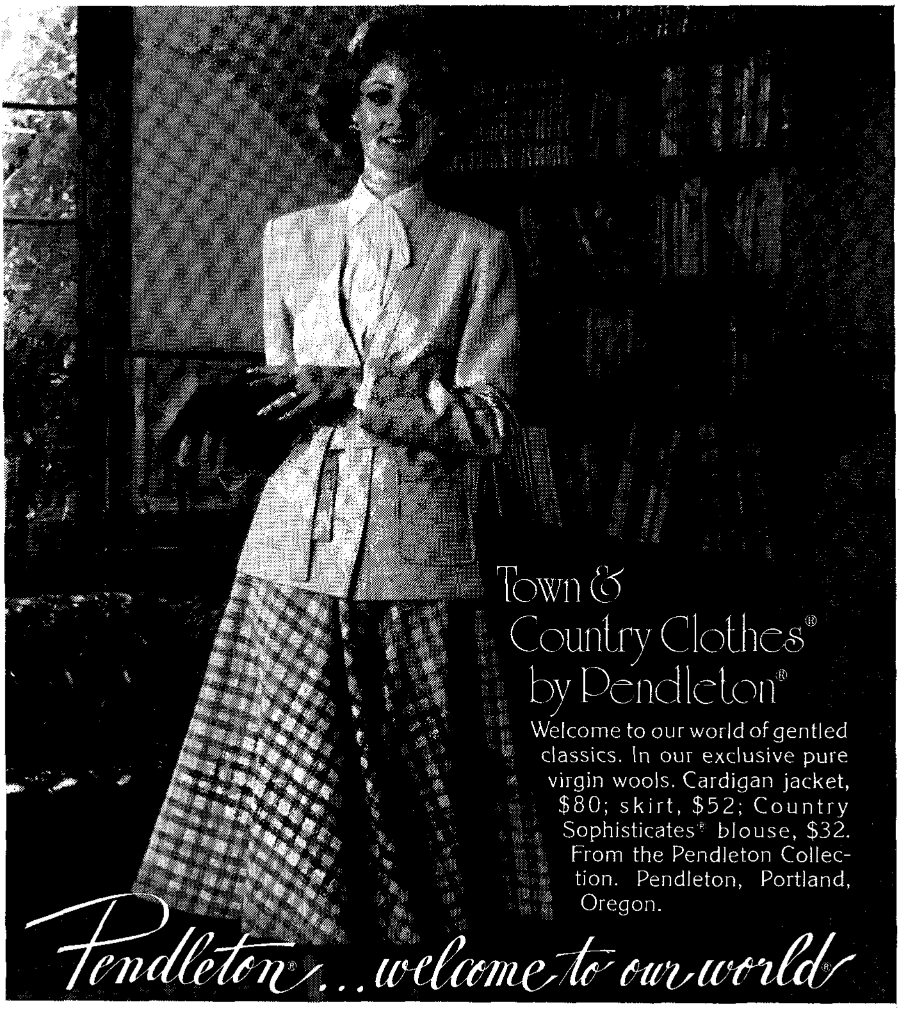
I'm out of my mind,
So won't you be kind
And please love Melvin Brooks?

He was not an overnight smash, but he improved with every performance and held down the job for the rest of the season, in the course of which, incidentally, he celebrated his sixteenth birthday.

ONE night last winter, Brooks dined with me at my rented house in Santa Monica. Although I was the host, he insisted on providing the wine, which turned out to be Château Lafite '66. (He makes the same stipulation wherever he eats. Even at the most expensive restaurants in Beverly Hills, Brooks will arrive with a neat leather case that holds two bottles from his own cellar. He does this partly because few wine lists offer items of comparable quality and partly because he sees no reason to pay exorbitant markups if he can avoid it. Thus, he exploits his status while restricting his expenditure, since the restaurateurs would rather slim their profits than lose his patronage.) Over dinner, he told me a little-known story, the saga of Brooks at war, which I here reproduce in his own words:

"I came in at the end. I went overseas with the artillery, and we docked at Le Havre, France, in February, 1945. Then I was transferred into the 1104th Combat Engineer Group. We travelled in a big truck through the nation of France on our way to Belgium, and every time we passed through a little town we'd see these signs—'*Boulangerie*,' '*Pâtisserie*,' and '*Rue*' this and '*Rue*' that, and rue the day you came here, young man. When we got to our hundred-and-eightieth French village, I screamed at the top of my lungs, 'The joke is over! English, *please!*' I couldn't believe that a whole country couldn't speak English. One-third of a nation, all right, but not a whole country. There was very little actual shooting in Belgium, but there was plenty of mortar and artillery fire, and it was very noisy, and I thought that I would not want to be in the war very long, because of the noise. The earth was very hard when I was there, and I could not dig a V-shaped foxhole, as I wanted to, and stay down at the bottom of the V for the rest of the war. All these hot fragments of shrapnel and stuff were flying around, and I did not want to die, so it was awful. I remember hiding under a desk in a kindergarten while there were air battles going on above us, and bombs rattling.

"I was a pfc. Once, I was out on patrol with seven other men, and we found a case of German rifles near an old railway siding—beautiful sharpshooting rifles with bolt action. Sure enough, there were some cartridges right next to them. So we had a contest. There were these white insulation things up on the telephone poles, and any man who shot one down won a dollar from each of the others. I was pretty good at that, and I'd made about twenty-one dollars when suddenly we got a strange call on our jeep radio. It said that German werewolves—guerrillas operating behind our lines—had cut all communication between the 1104th and the Ninth Army by destroying the telephone wires. My God, I realized it was us, so we barrelled right back to camp, and they said 'Did you see anything?' and we said 'Not a thing.' Then I became very brave. I said, 'Give me some men, sir, and I'll go back. We gotta stop these werewolves.' So I was sent out again on patrol to hunt them down. We hung around the railway siding for about four hours and then came back. My colonel offered to make me a corporal on the spot, and I said, 'No, no, sir, I'm not worthy of it.' Because I knew that noncoms and officers got killed, and that somehow privates could



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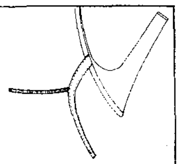

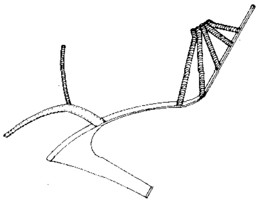

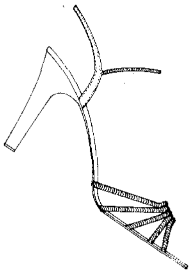

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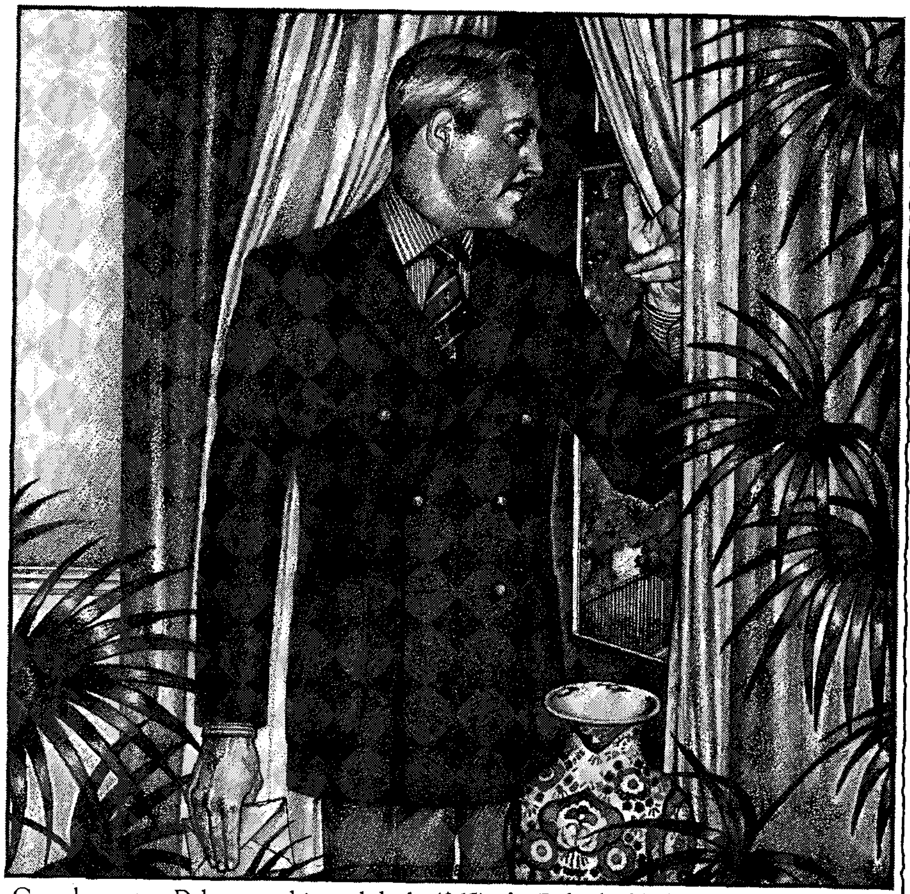

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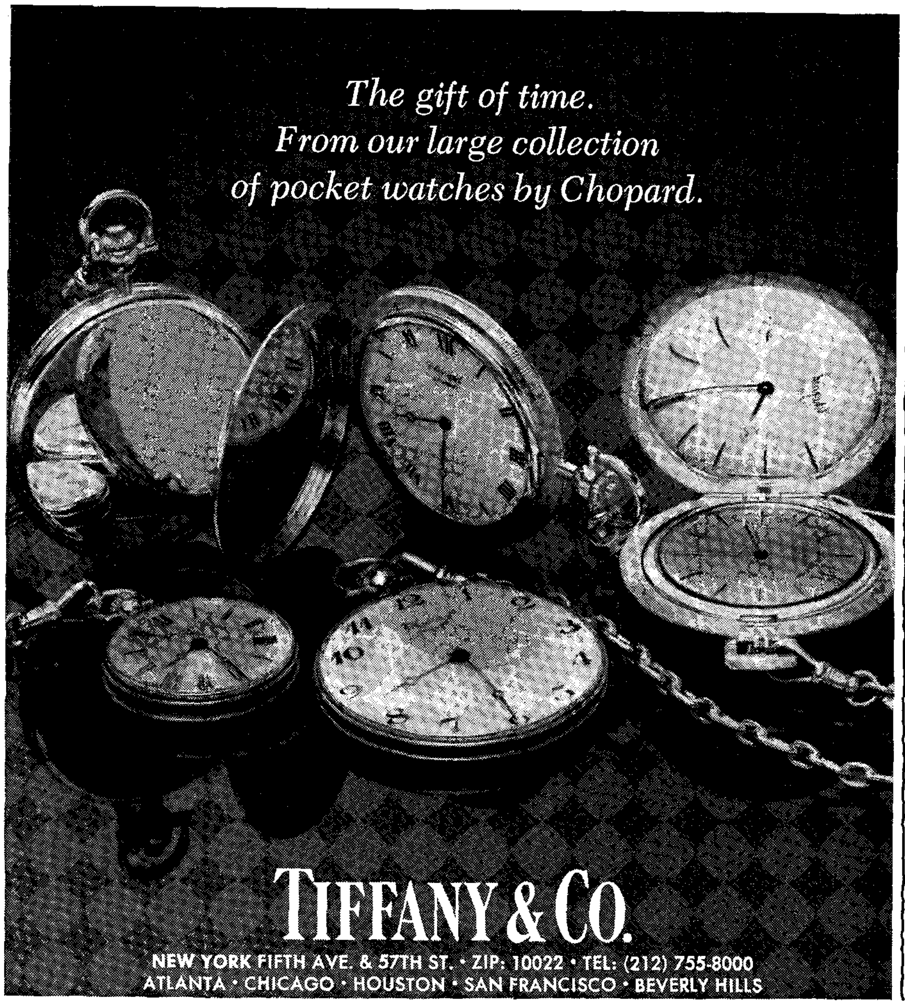

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survive in This Thing Called War.

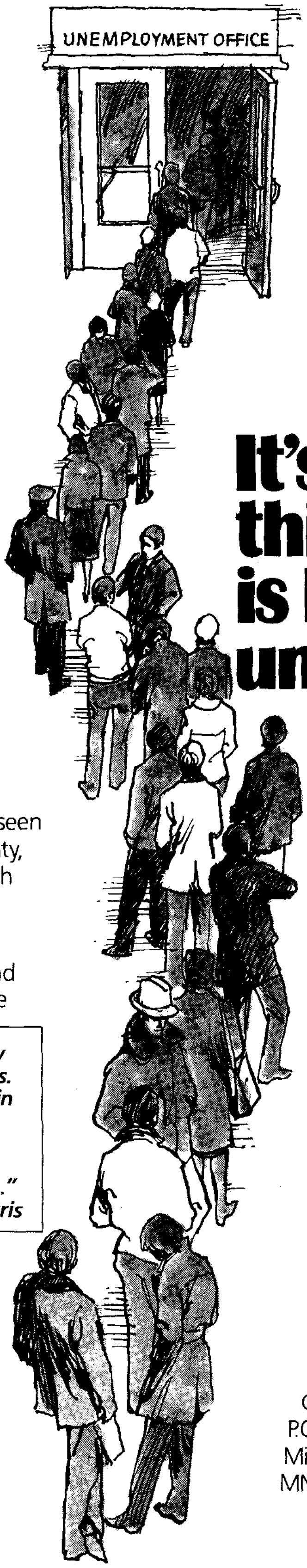
"Along the roadside, you'd see bodies wrapped up in mattress covers and stacked in a ditch, and those would be Americans, that could be me. And I sang all the time; I made up funny songs; I never wanted to think about it. Some guy would say, 'We're gonna be killed, we'll never get out of this war,' and I'd say, 'Nobody dies—it's all made up.' Because otherwise we'd all get hysterical, and that kind of hysteria—it's not like sinking, it's like slowly taking on water, and that's the panic. Death is the enemy of everyone, and, even though you hate Nazis, death is more of an enemy than a German soldier.

"At the end, it was very sad, because the Germans were sending old men and little boys to fight against us. I was very good about that. I'd say, 'No shooting, throw down your guns,' and talk to them in Yiddish and German. Of course, when we ran into pockets of trained German soldiers, genuine S.S. *Flammenwerfer* Nazis who wanted to die rather than surrender, I'd hide, because they'd kill you as soon as look at you. But these groups of little boys and old men wanted nothing but just to go to their mothers or their toilets. From around April 25th onward was the worst two weeks of my life. Then it was over, and it was V-E Day. And on V-E Day I hid again, because the Americans all got drunk and fired off every round of ammunition they had, and a lot of people were killed in the festivities. I knew if I went out on the street I'd get shot to death. I was in a village near Wiesbaden, and the May wine was still green. It can make you very drunk, so I found a wine cellar and opened a hundred bottles of it and poured it all over me. I stayed there for twenty-four hours, until the shooting had stopped."

"And then you went back to the States?" I asked.

"No," Brooks said. "You see, I was the barracks character, and they didn't want to lose me. My major said to me, 'Melvin, why not stay with us and travel around providing the boys with entertainment?' I said 'Great!' So he made me a corporal and gave me an old Mercedes, a real beauty. Then I told him I'd need a chauffeur, and he said, 'I can't let you have a military man.' I said, 'Could you spare a few pfennigs for a German civilian driver?' He said 'Fine,' so I found a German fiddle player named Helga, who became my chauffeuse. My official title was Noncom in Charge of Special Services, and I did shows for enlisted

Technology can be the source of many jobs society needs.



It's about time this idea is better understood.

Many still associate technological innovation with elimination of jobs. That's understandable. We've all seen new machines and new processes increase productivity, permitting work to get done faster, cheaper...and with fewer people.

What most people don't recognize is that technological innovation, producing new products and services, creates jobs...far more than it eliminates. The telephone, the automobile, the computer have spawned millions of new jobs.

"Technology is know-how. Simply stated, it's a way of doing things. How to grow two stalks of rice in place of one is know-how or technology. The design of equipment to heat homes with solar energy is another example."
William C. Norris

Yet there remains an imbalance between technological innovation to improve productivity...and technological innovation to create new products and services. Much more of the latter is needed.

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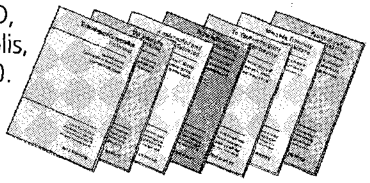

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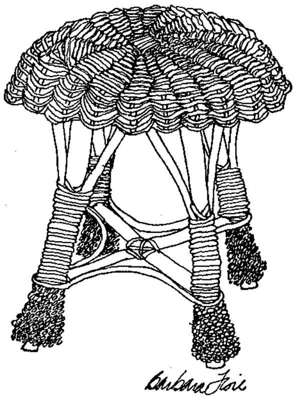
men and officers' clubs. Sometimes for a whole division, with tens of thousands of people out front. I told big, lousy jokes. Every time Bob Hope came by, I would write down all his jokes and use them. Nothing frightened me. I sang like Al Jolson. Everybody could do the low Jolson, but I did the high Jolson that nobody else could do—things like 'I love you as I loved you when you were *sweeeet sixteeeen.*' People said they appreciated that. My chauffeuse played the fiddle for them, and together we fiddled in the back seat of the Mercedes.

"I used to go to Frankfurt with my special pass and obtain certain rare cognacs and stick them in my ear. There wasn't a nineteen-year-old soldier who got drunker than I did. Helga played Brahms' 'Lullaby' beautifully. *I'd say, 'Pull over to the curb and play* Brahms' "Lullaby."' That dream world lasted for four months. Then they told me my Occupation duties were over and I could go back to civilian life. And I said, 'No, no—let me die in the back of the Mercedes with Helga.' But they sent me home anyway."

PROFESSIONALLY speaking, what he returned to was almost three years of not very much. During his absence, things had been moving fast for his friend Caesar. While serving in the Coast Guard, Caesar had appeared in a recruiting revue called "Tars and Spars;" its director was Max Liebman, a sharp-eyed impresario who already numbered Imogene Coca and Danny (Kaminsky) Kaye among his discoveries. Dominated by Caesar's comedy routines, "Tars and Spars" opened in Florida and then went on a national tour, after which Columbia made a movie version that retained nothing of the original except the title and Caesar. His notices when the film was released, in 1946, launched him on a thriving career in night clubs and vaudeville houses. Nobody, however, seemed inclined to discover Brooks. To demonstrate the versatility of his face, he hired a photographer to snap him in four contrasting moods—Brooks beaming, Brooks scowling, Brooks pensive, and Brooks aghast—and had the results printed on one page, copies of which he sent in vain to every agent in town. He once arrived without an appointment at the headquarters of the eminent producer Kermit Bloomgarden. "There were dozens of actors waiting to see him, some of them quite famous," Brooks told me. "I walked up to his secretary and said, 'Paul Muni is here. I have to go in three minutes.' She got on the intercom, and within ten seconds Bloomgarden came running out of his office. He looked at me and said, 'This boy is not Paul Muni.' I said, 'Muni's name is Harold Gottwald. I am the *real* Paul Muni.' [Whose *real* real name, incidentally, was Muni Weisenfreund.] Then Bloomgarden grabbed me by the collar and said, 'You've got a lot of moxie. I'm going to remember you.' But he didn't give me an audition."



Under the pressure of need or fear, Brooks was capable of any audacity. One night during this period, he went *out to New Jersey to see the come*dian Ronny Graham, who was a friend of his, performing in cabaret. After the show, Graham gave him a lift back to New York. To continue in Brooks's words: "We stopped off on the way to have a sandwich at a diner. It was about 3 A.M. and the place was full of enormous truck drivers. Ronny was still wearing his stage makeup and some pretty avant-garde clothes, and these big, hairy men all swivelled round and started to stare at us. Some of them even stood up. While we were eating, everything went very quiet. I was terrified. Suddenly, I turned on Ronny like a cobra and said, 'I want my ring back.' He said, 'What?' I said, 'You *spoke* to that *man.* Back at the club. Don't think I didn't see you speaking to him, because I did. *I want my ring back.*' And we both went into this berserk faggot row. Finally, I picked up my cup of coffee and threw it in his face. Then I flounced out to the car with Ronny right behind me, wiping his eyes and screaming. Some of the truck drivers followed us out to the parking lot. They just stood there, dumbstruck, with their hands on their hips, as we drove off, kissing and making up. I waved at them out of the window."

In the autumn of 1947, Caesar invited Brooks to come and see him at the Roxy, where he was starring in the stage show that accompanied the long-running movie "Forever Amber." Afterward, in his dressing room, Caesar mentioned that Max Liebman was planning a revue for presentation on

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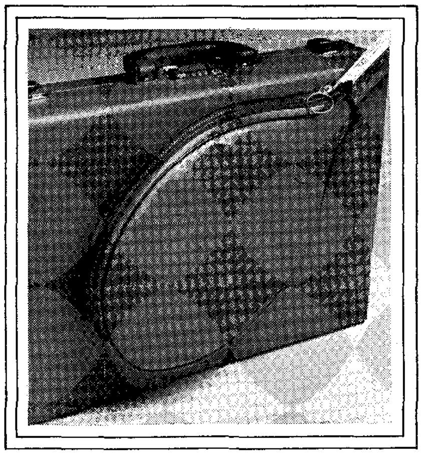

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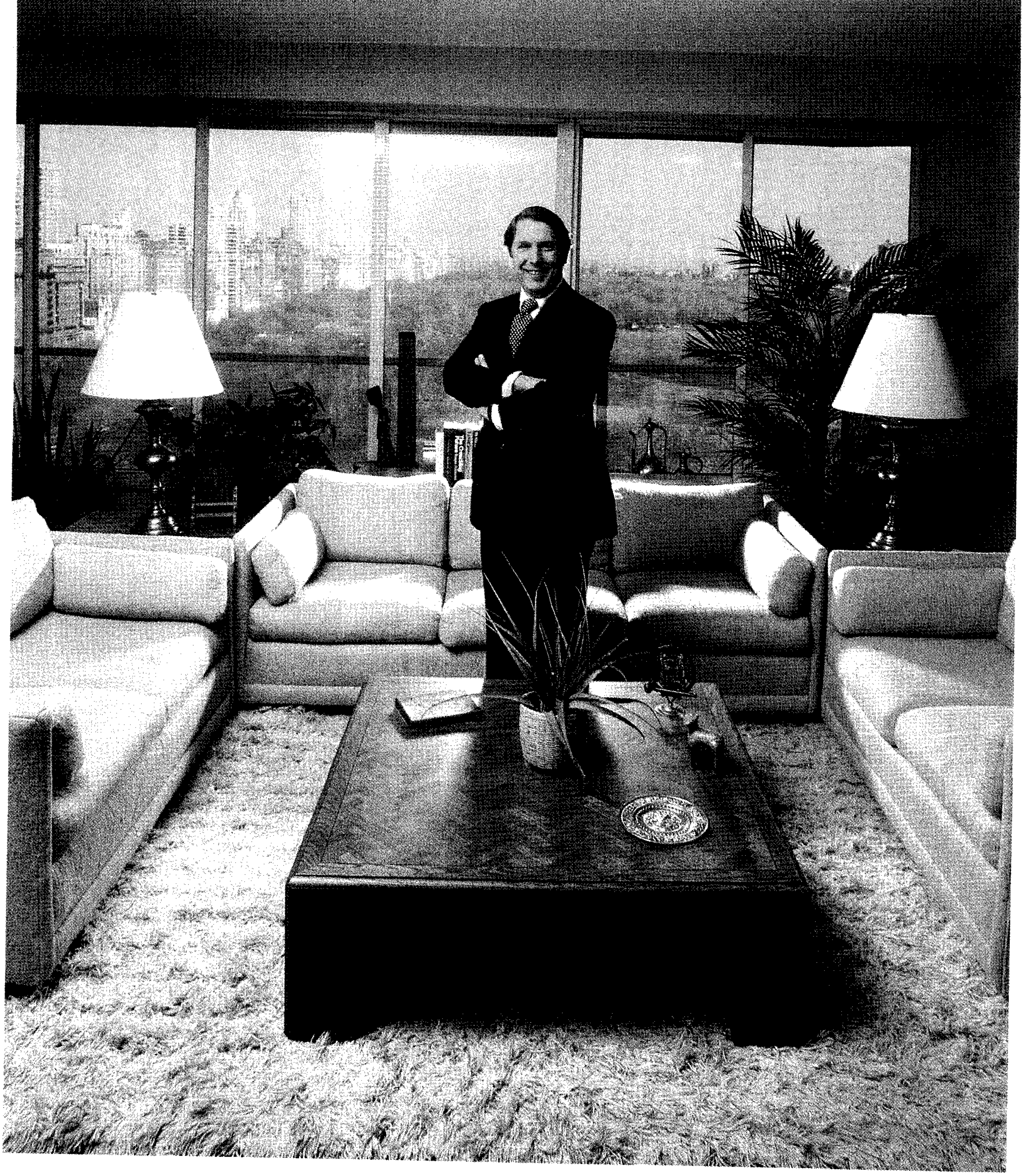

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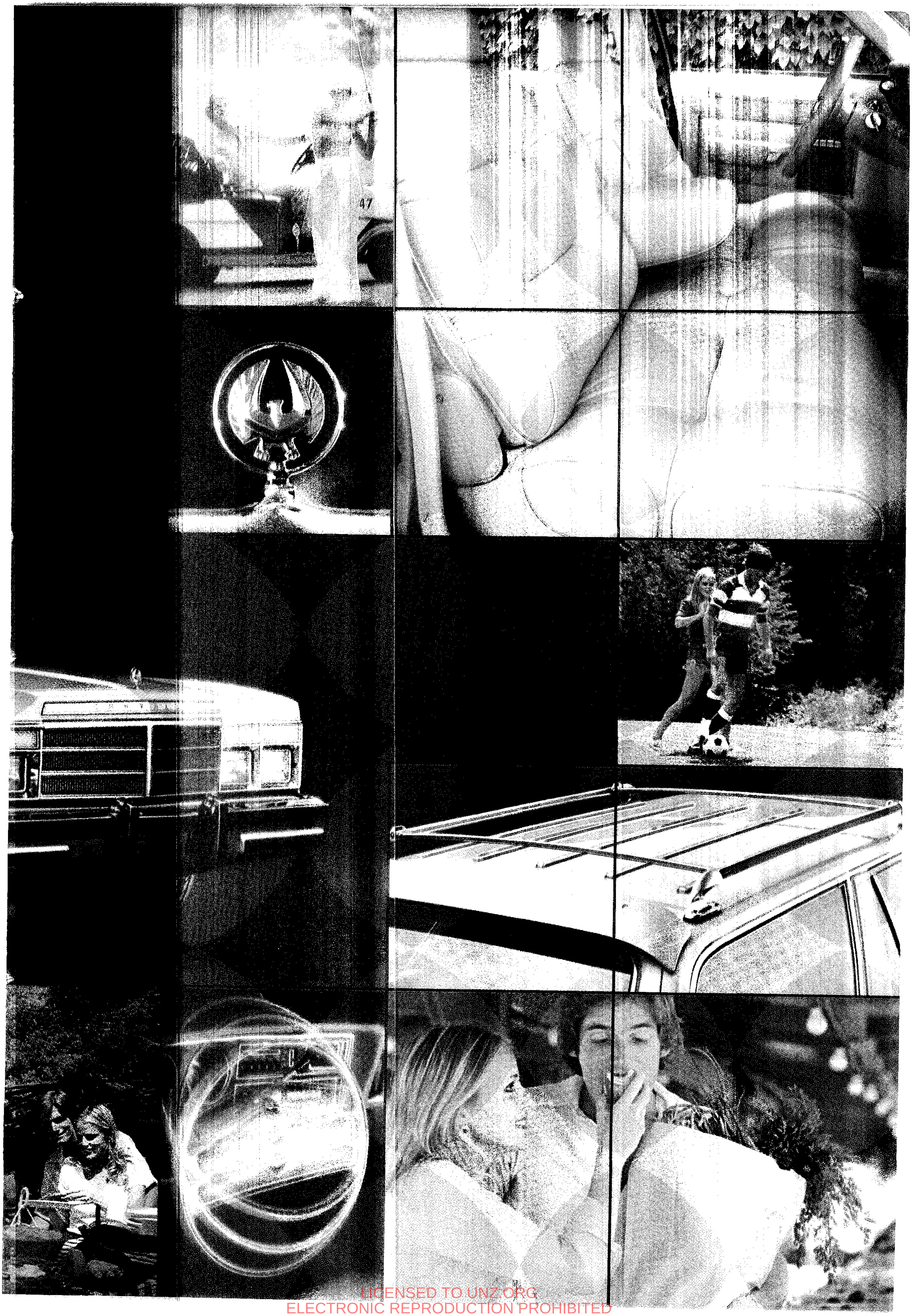

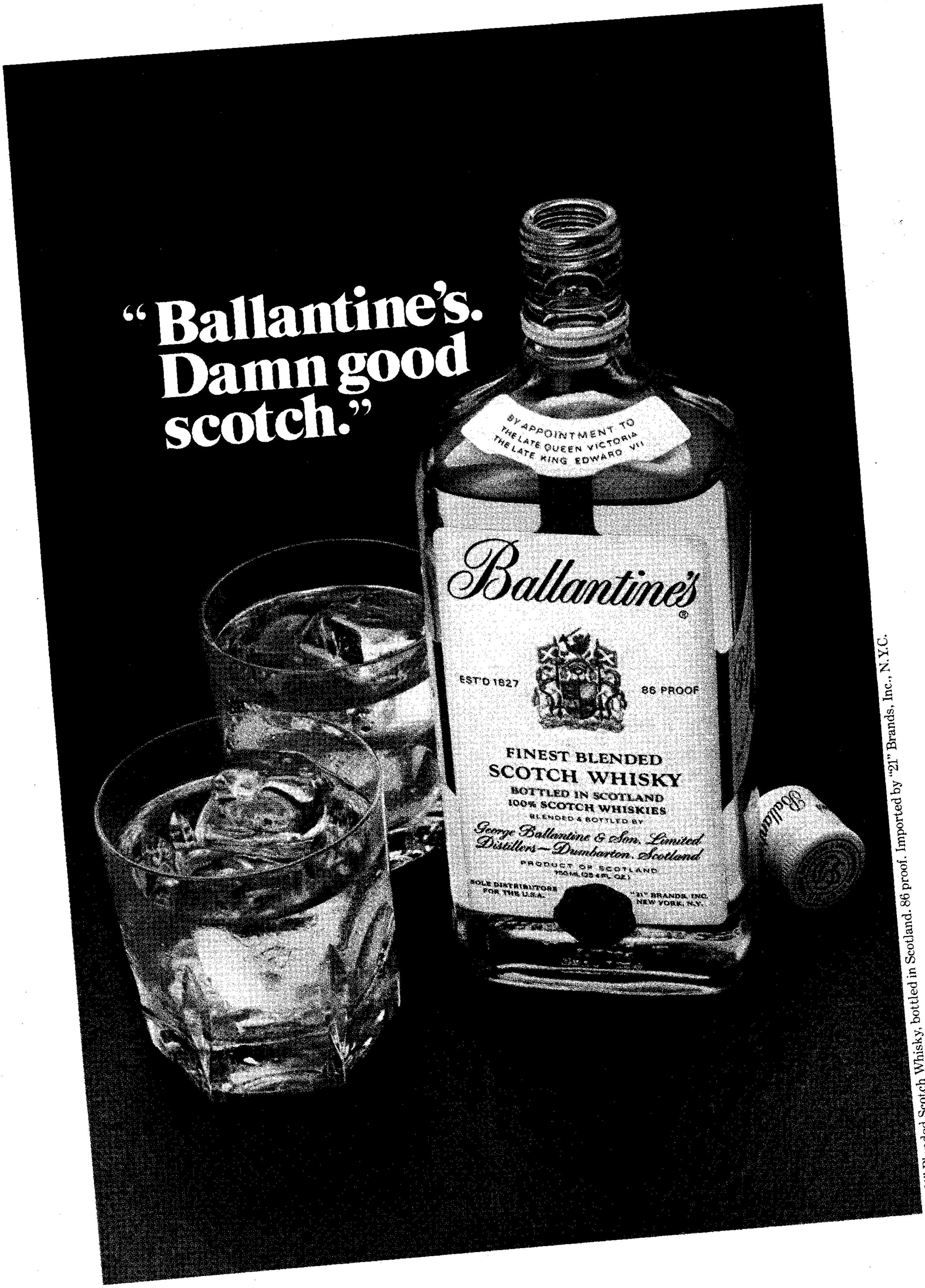
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television. "What is that?" Brooks claims to have asked, and he further claims to have received the reply "It's a thing that takes pictures of you and sends them into people's living rooms."

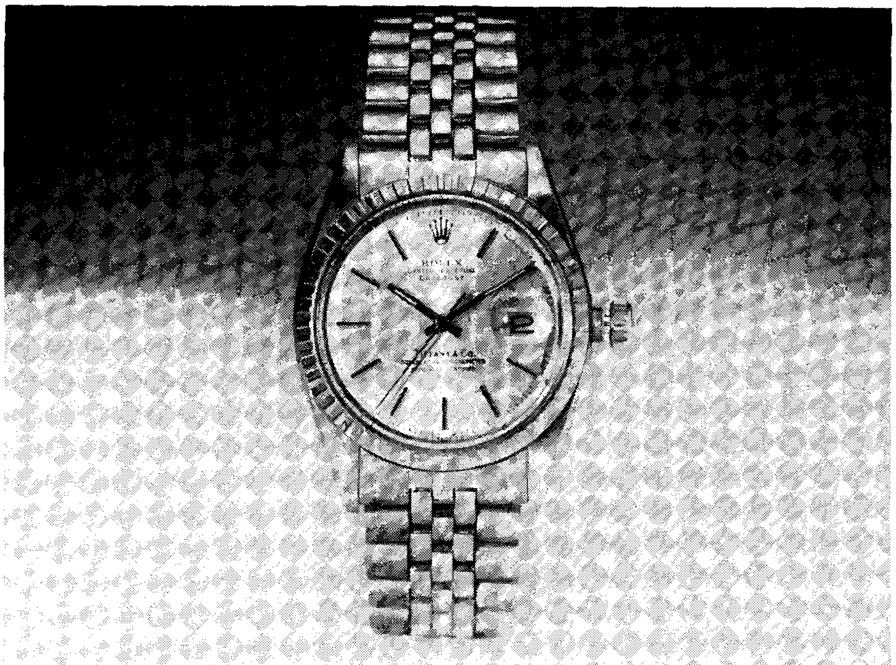
"Don't do it," Brooks begged him, straight-faced. "It's trafficking in graven images, and there are strict Jewish laws against that. You better stay away from that stuff or you'll never get your image back. The very least that can happen is that you'll be sterilized by the cameras."

A superstitious man, Caesar was thoroughly unnerved by Brooks's little joke. A few months later, however, when Brooks was directing a shoestring production in Red Bank, New Jersey, Caesar called him with the news that he had decided to risk infertility. He had signed with NBC to appear in "The Admiral Broadway Revue," a sixty-minute program, produced by Liebman, that would make its début in January, 1949. Caesar proposed a deal whereby he personally would pay Brooks a weekly stipend of fifty dollars to supply him with special material. Brooks jumped at the offer.

"The Admiral Broadway Revue," which ran for nineteen sparkling weeks, was an acorn that soon grew into an oak. With many of the same participants—e.g., Caesar and Imogene Coca as performers, Mel Tolkin and Lucille Kallen as principal writers, and Liebman as producer—it reappeared in February, 1950, now expanded into a full-blown, high-budget, prime-time, ninety-minute Saturday-night event, entitled "Your Show of Shows." Brooks refused to renew his private arrangement with Caesar; as he put it, "I don't want to be your boy." Instead, Liebman hired him, at a hundred and fifty a week. His first contribution to the new series was the famous sketch in which Caesar played a jungle boy who is discovered, clad in a lion skin, roaming the streets of New York.

Interviewer: Sir, how do you survive in New York City? . . . What do you eat?
Caesar: Pigeon.
Interviewer: Don't the pigeons object?
Caesar: Only for a minute.
Interviewer (*bringing up a recurrent Brooksian obsession*): What are you afraid of more than anything?
Caesar: Buick.
Interviewer: You're afraid of a Buick?
Caesar: Yes. Buick can win in death struggle. Must sneak up on parked Buick, punch grille hard. Buick die.

Within a couple of months, Brooks's salary had risen to two hundred dol-



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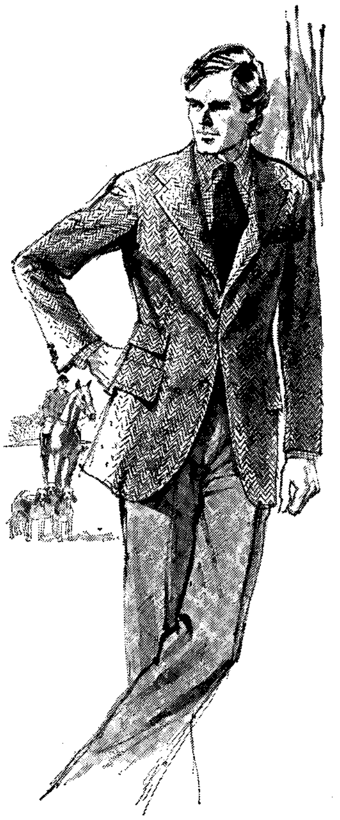

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lars, from which it steadily ascended to the peak of five thousand.

Many detailed accounts exist of the writing team that worked on "Your Show of Shows." Not since the Algonquin Round Table has a group of American wits been more extensively chronicled. In addition to Tolkin, Kallen, and Brooks, it eventually included Joseph Stein (who wrote the book of "Fiddler on the Roof"), Larry Gelbart, and Neil Simon, with Michael Stewart (author-to-be of "Hello, Dolly!") acting as typist, a post in which he was later replaced by "a little red-headed rat"—to cite Brooks's affectionate phrase—named Woody Allen. Carl Reiner and Howard Morris, from the supporting cast, threw in ideas; and Caesar, with Liebman at his side, presided over the collective delirium, a madhouse of competing egos in which nobody could outshout Brooks. According to Miss Kallen, "Mel imitated everything from a rabbinical student to Moby Dick thrashing about on the floor with six harpoons sticking in his back."

Tolkin told me, "Half of Mel's creativity comes out of fear and anger. He doesn't perform, he screams." (By the end of 1950, Tolkin and Caesar were already in psychoanalysis, and it is not surprising that in the following year Brooks also took to the couch. His therapist had been analyzed by Theodor Reik, who had been a protégé of Sigmund Freud. Brooks felt that what he learned, though it might not be straight from the horse's mouth, was at least feedbox noise from the same stable.)

Addressing the American Film Institute in 1977, Brooks said, "We wrote things that made *us* laugh . . . not what we thought the audience would dig. . . . What really collapsed us, grabbed our bellies, knocked us down on the floor and made us spit and laugh so we couldn't breathe—*that* went into the script. Except for the dirty portions, which we couldn't do on live television."

A character in which Brooks specialized, and in which his distinctive comic style first began to assert itself, was the German Professor, played by Caesar. He appeared under many names—such as Kurt von Stuffer, the dietitian, or Siegfried von Sedativ, the authority on sleep—always pontificating with the same majestic fraudulence in the same bedraggled and ill-fitting frock coat. His ignorance, exposed by Carl Reiner's questions, was boundless in its scope and variety. How, for instance, do aircraft fly? As Dr. Rudolf von Rudder, aeronautical expert, he spelled out the an-

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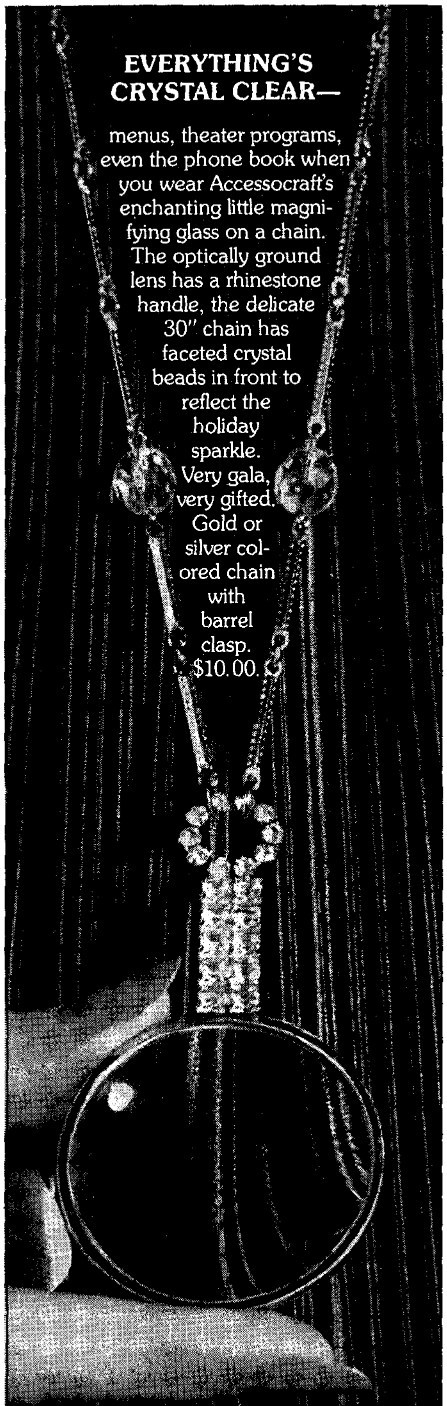

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swer in layman's language: "It's a simple theory. Matter is lighter than air. You see, the motors, they pull the plane forward and they cause a draft, and then it taxis faster down the field and the motors go faster and the whole plane vibrates, and then, when there's enough of a draft and a vacuum created, the plane rises off the runway into the air. From then on, it's a miracle. I don't know what keeps it up."

After a complex buildup, the laugh comes not from a witty, climactic payoff but from a sudden plunge into bathos. We hear exactly what we would expect to hear from this obvious half-wit. Cf. the reply of Dr. Heinrich von Heartburn when Reiner asked him for his advice on keeping one's marriage alive: "Make it interesting. . . . I showed a friend of mine once how to keep his marriage exciting. . . . One day he'd come home from work, his wife would open the door, he's a French soldier. . . . The next day he's a policeman, he comes in, he starts to run around with the handcuffs and the badges, and the next day he don't come through the door, he jumps through the window, he's a clown. He somersaults all over the living room and throws his wife all around the place. [Pause] She left him. He was a maniac."

A final glimpse of the Professor (for which, as for the preceding quotes from the original scripts, I draw on the lengthy extracts reprinted in Ted Sennett's book "Your Show of Shows"): In the guise of a mountaineering pundit, he is mourning the loss of a colleague, Hans Goodfellow, who gave his life trying to prove that it was possible to climb mountains on roller skates. What should a climber do, Reiner inquires, if his rope breaks?

CAESAR: Well, as soon as you see the rope breaking, scream and keep screaming all the way down. . . . This way they'll know where to find you.

REINER: But, Professor, isn't there anything else you can do?

CAESAR: Well, there's the other method. As soon as the rope breaks, you spread your arms and begin to fly.

REINER: But humans can't fly.

CAESAR: How do you know? You might be the first one. Anyway, you can always go back to screaming.

REINER: Was Hans Goodfellow a flier or a screamer?

CAESAR: He was a flying screamer, and a crasher, too.

In this exchange, and dozens like it, Brooks was breaking fresh ground, exploring territory that he was eventually to make his own. He was inventing the interview as a new form of comic art.

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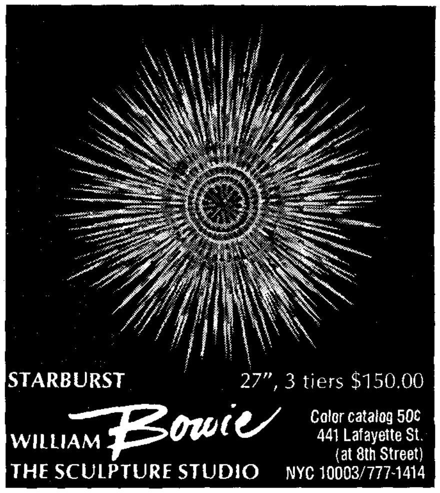

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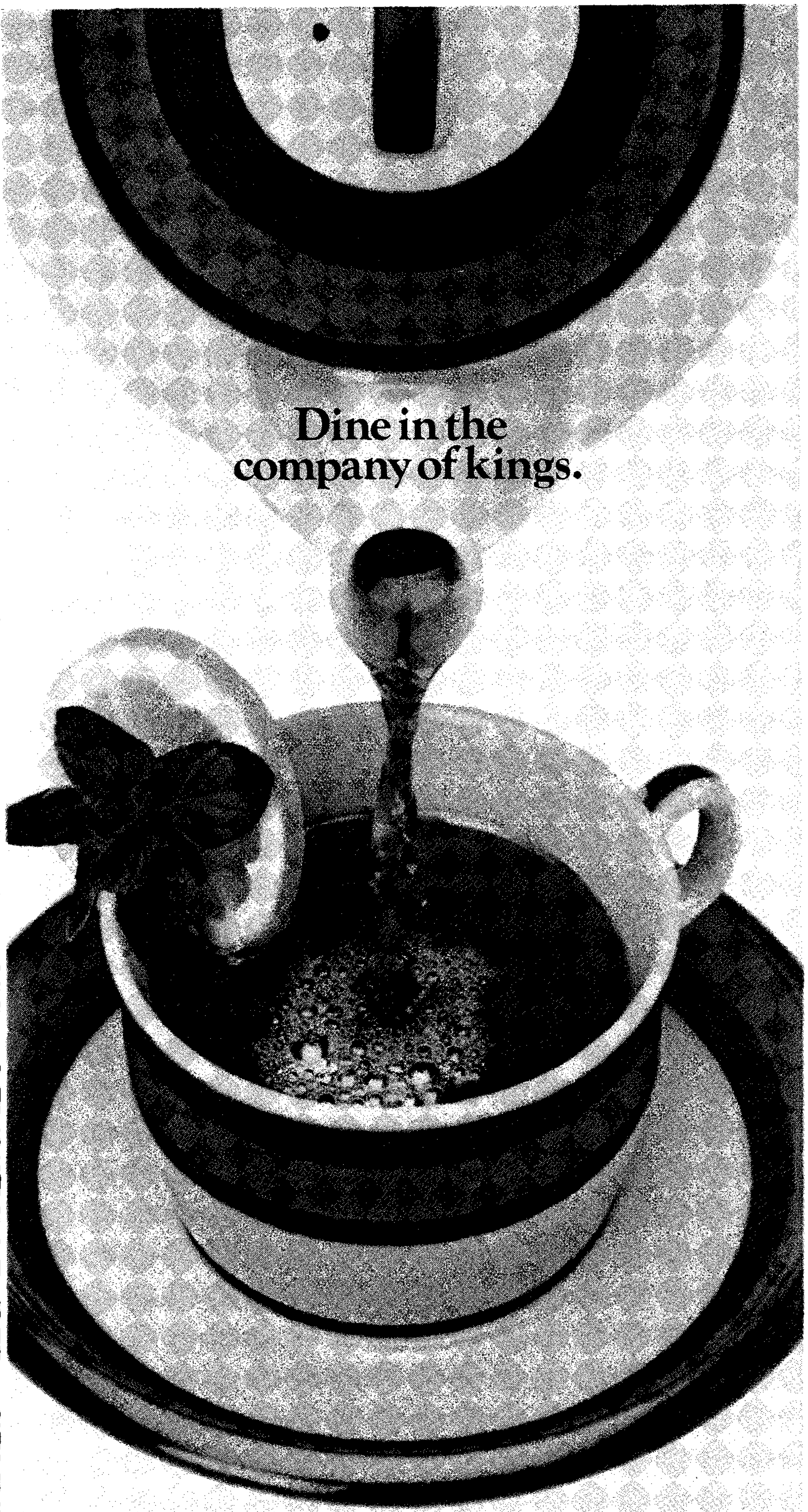
time Brooks was married to Florence Baum, a dancer in Broadway musicals. They had three children—in order of appearance, Stefanie, Nicholas, and Edward. The youngest is now studying music in Manhattan, while both of the older ones are taking courses in film at New York University. Brooks refers to them as "these nice friends I've grown." Their parents were divorced in 1962. "We had married too young," Brooks said, more than a decade later. "I expected I would marry my mother, and she expected she would marry her father." Minus Coca, Caesar returned to the small screen in 1954, starring in a show of his own called "Caesar's Hour." He was also minus Brooks, who, determined to go his own way, had rejected the offer of a top writing job on the new program. Before long, however, Brooks regretted his decision to quit the nest. His own way was leading him nowhere but into debt, and after the show's first season, unable to resist the money, he rejoined his old boss, under whose paternal shadow he stayed until 1959. Which brings us back to Mamma Leone's.

ALTHOUGH Brooks left a lasting impression on everyone who saw him at the Moss Hart jamboree, it did nothing to help his career. He was a brilliant party turn, but what had after-dinner improvisation to do with professional comedy? In 1960, with his marriage crumbling and no source of income, he went job-hunting to Hollywood, where Carl Reiner was already working. Hearing that they were both in town, Joe Fields threw a party in their honor, on the tacit understanding that they would provide the entertainment. Before an audience of celebrities that included Steve Allen and George Burns, they got up and did the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man. When the applause had died down, Burns said, "Listen, you better put that on a record, because if you don't, I'll steal it." Allen, who shared Burns' enthusiasm, had friends who were highly placed in the recording business. He made a call to one of them the following morning.

"A few days later," Reiner told me, "Mel and I walked into a studio at World Pacific Records and ad-libbed for over two hours." The edited result was an L.P. that came out in the spring of 1961 and sold over a million copies. "That was a turning point for Mel," Reiner continued. "It gave him an identity as a performer for the first time." Moreover, it gave him a comic



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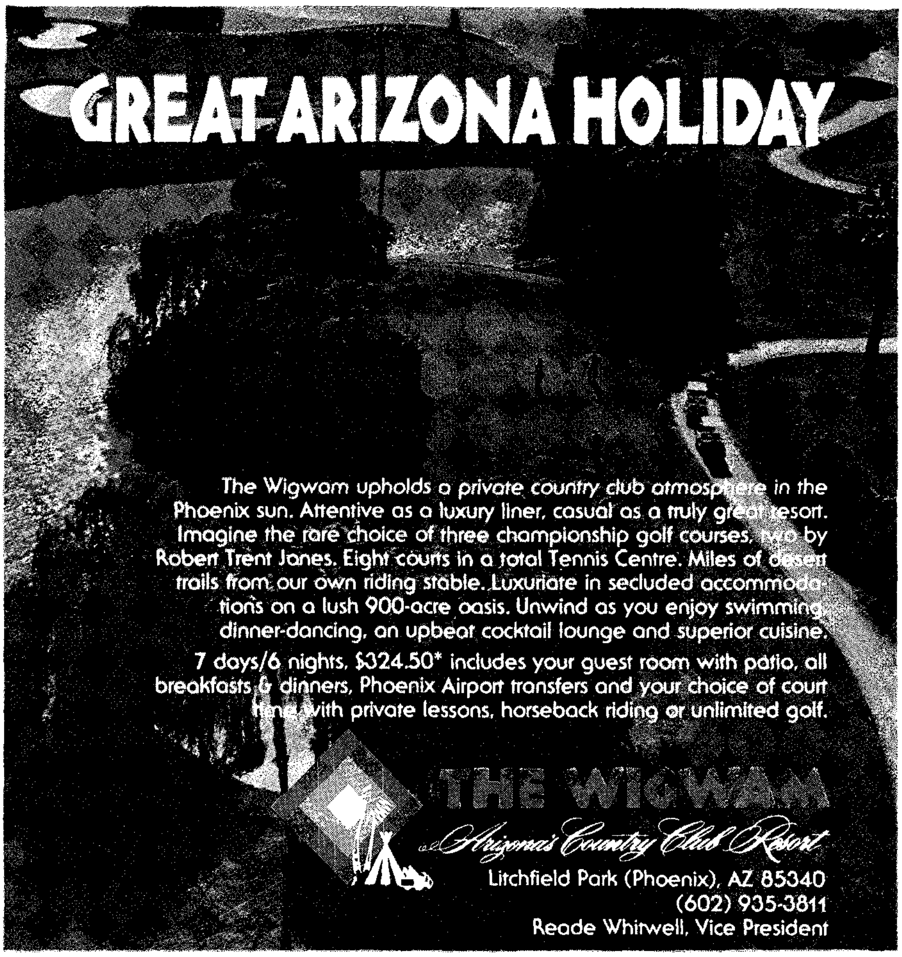

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persona that at once embodied and exorcised his own deepest anxieties; for the main point about this jaunty survivor—more than twice as old as Methuselah and still going strong—is that he has conquered death. By playing a character who was immortal, Brooks may have staked his principal claim to immortality as a comedian.

Gene Wilder summed up for me a mental image he has of Brooks: "I see him standing bare-chested on top of a mountain, shouting 'Look at me!' and 'Don't let me die!' Those are the two things that rule his life." They recur throughout his records with Reiner, of which, to date, there are four. Following the runaway success of the original L.P., further revelations by the garrulous oldster of his close encounters with "the great and the near-great" of the past two millennia were issued in the fall of 1961, with sequels in 1963 and 1973. In these classic interviews, Brooks triumphs not only over death but over another of his besetting phobias, that of the lifelong seeker after father substitutes who fears he will never make a convincing father himself; for what is the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man if not the most prolific parent on earth? He tells us that he has been married "several hundred times" and that when he looks back on his wives "a thousand violins explode in my mind."

REINER: How many children do you have?
BROOKS (*with stoical self-pity*): I have over forty-two thousand children, and not one comes to visit me.

At least, he misses their company, which is more than can be said for Warren Bland, the Gentile advertising executive who is one of the many other characters Brooks plays on these remarkable discs. Bland lives in the city of Connecticut, Connecticut, "a very exclusive community," where they don't allow children. They *have* children, of course, but "we send them to Hartford . . . to Jewish and Italian families, people who like children." From time to time, Bland goes on, "I might just mosey over to Hartford, say 'Hi, gang!,' you know, and then speed right back to Connecticut, Connecticut."

As Bland, Brooks has a quintessentially WASP accent. When he is playing the bimillenarian, it becomes not Jewish but—Brooks is insistent on this—*American*-Jewish. "Within a couple of decades, there won't be any more accents like that," he said to me. "They're being ironed out by history, because there are no more Jewish immigrants. It's the sound I was brought up on, and it's dying." Beneath the jokes, these recordings are a threnody. Even on the surface, there are odd moments of unexpected melancholy, as when the patriarch reflects, "We mock the thing we are to be. We make fun of the old, and then we become them." Although he has foxed the grim reaper, it has often been by inches. He has led a life dominated by peril and hostility, in which practically every human activity springs from one motive.

Brooks: Everything we do is based on fear.

Reiner: Even love?

Brooks: Mainly love.

Reiner: How can love stem from fear?

Brooks: What do you need a woman for?... In my time, to see if an animal is behind you. You can't see alone, you got no eyes in the back of your head.... The first marriages were: "Will you take a look behind me?" "O.K., how long do you want?" "Forever." "We're married."

Reiner: I see. And you walked back to back for the rest of your life?

Brooks: Yes. You only looked at her once in a while—

Reiner: When you knew you were safe?

Brooks: When you were on the high ground.

All of which corroborates the scriptural doctrine that perfect love casteth out fear. (And, I might add, compares very favorably with the behavior of a well-known English writer who fled London during the wartime blitz, pausing only to explain to his girlfriend, "Perfect fear casteth out love.") Again, consider the following exchange:

Reiner: What was the means of transportation then?

Brooks: Mostly fear.... You would see an animal that would growl, you would go two miles in a minute. Fear would be the main propulsion.

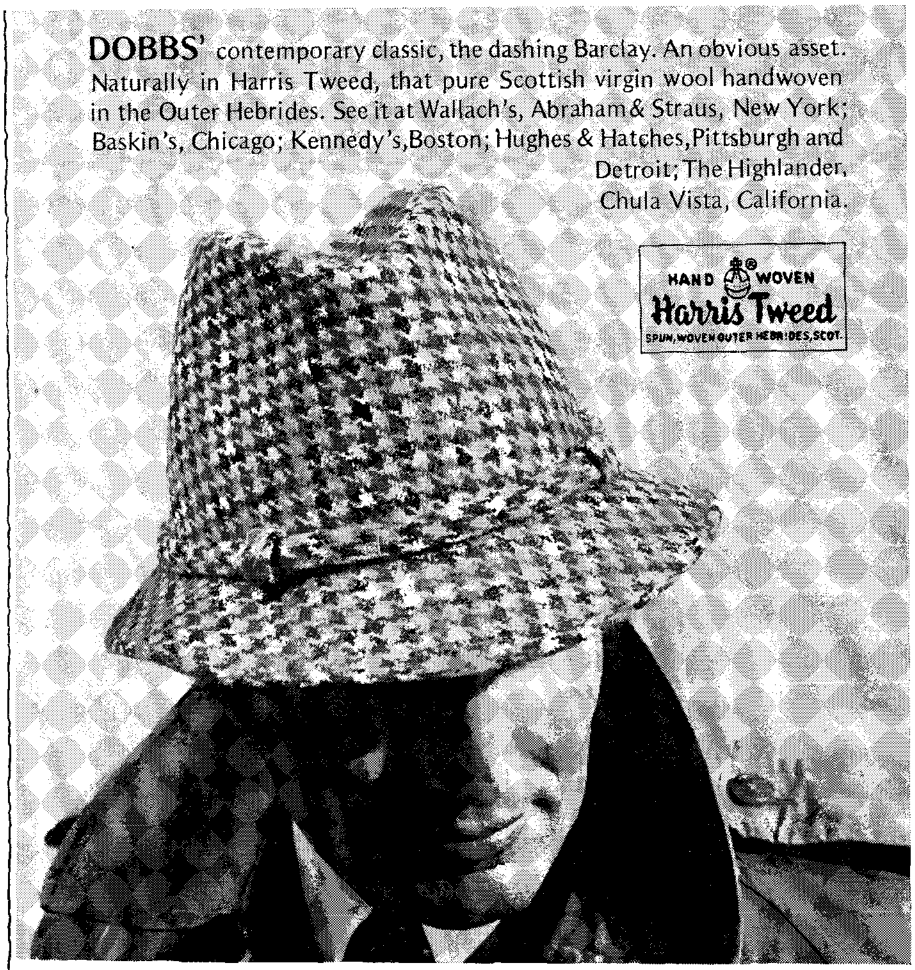
As for the origins of human speech:

Brooks: We spoke Rock, basic Rock. ...Two hundred years before Hebrew was the Rock language. Or Rock talk.

Reiner: Could you give us an example of that?

Brooks: Yes. "Hey, don't throw that rock at me! What you doing with that rock? Put down that rock!"

In other words—or, rather, in no other words—the need to communicate arose from the threat of imminent assault. Similarly, the custom of shaking hands "stemmed from fear." In order to check whether the other fellow was carrying a rock or a dagger, "you grabbed his hand—'Hi there, Charlie!,' 'How you doing, Bertram?'—and you held that hand, then you looked and you opened it up and you shook it a little." The primal art of dance evolved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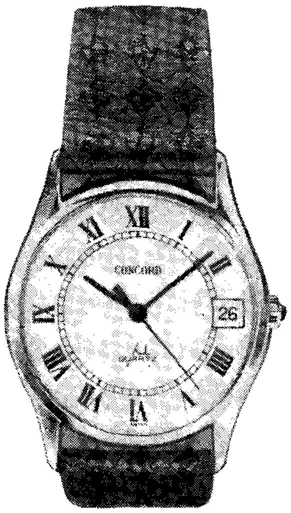

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because it was an even more comprehensive means of self-protection. By dancing with your antagonist, you immobilize *both* of his hands and "you keep the feet busy, so he can't kick you." Song, too, had its roots in terror. If you were in real danger, a high-pitched rhythmical yelling was the only way to make anyone pay attention. The message had to be simple and ear-catching, as witness the opening lines of the first lyric ever sung:

A lion is eating my foot off,
Will somebody call a cop?

Shortly afterward came national anthems, with which each group of cave dwellers tried to frighten its neighbors; e.g.:

Let them all go to hell
Except Cave Seventy-six.

The old man has immunized himself against death by obeying a number of rules—some pragmatic, some purely superstitious—which he is eager to share with us. Every morning, for instance, he sinks to his knees and prays "fiercely" for twenty-two minutes "that the ceiling shouldn't fall on me, or my heart should not attack me." Among his other precepts for longevity: avoid fried food; consume nectarines in bulk ("Even a rotten one is good. . . . I'd rather eat a rotten nectarine than a fine plum"); never run for a bus; and "stay out of a Ferrari or any small Italian car." He has also preserved his pep by using drugs derived from "certain barks of certain trees that made you jump in the air and sing 'Sweet Sue.' "

His fear of illness, though intense, is more than matched by his fear of hospitals, which are run today, he believes, on principles that have not changed since his troglodytic youth.

REINER: What are these principles?
BROOKS: The principle of people walking past you when you are screaming, and not caring. The same wonderful indifference to the sick and the dying.

Over the centuries, some of this indifference has rubbed off onto his own philosophy. It emerges most vividly when Reiner challenges him to define the difference between comedy and tragedy. His reply, brutally concise, is an aphorism as memorable as any I have heard on this ancient subject: "Tragedy is if I cut my finger. Comedy is if you walk into an open sewer and die."

He drops names like a drunken waiter dropping plates: few great reputations pass through his hands unchipped. Robin Hood "stole from ev-

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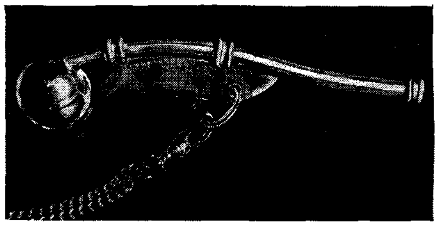

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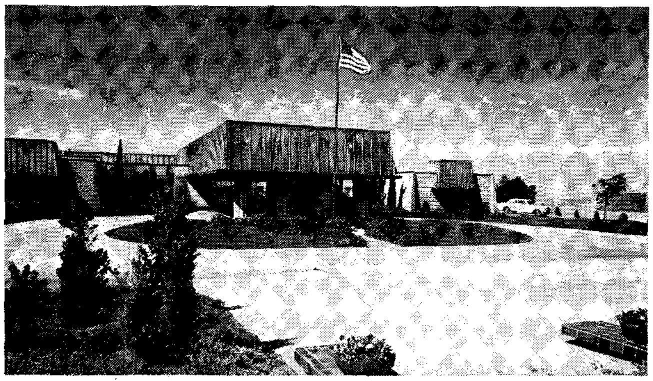

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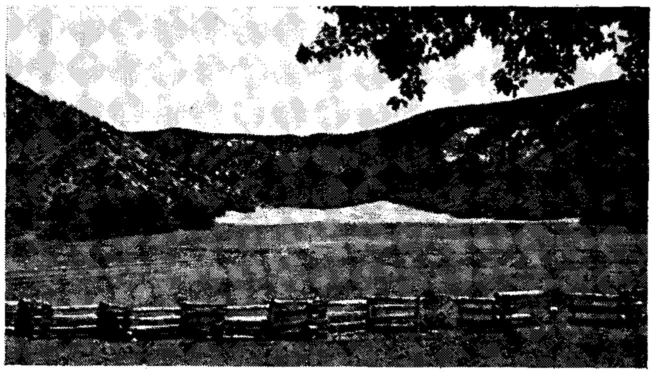

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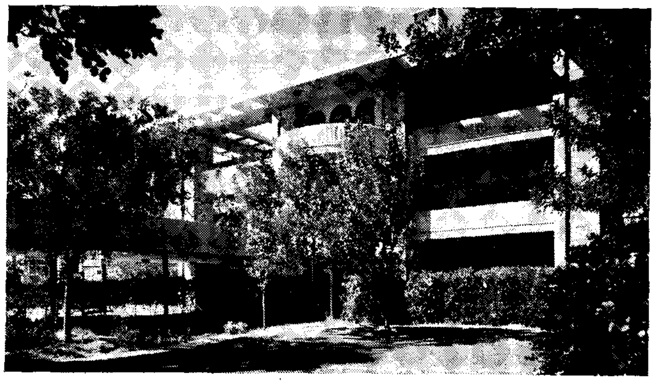

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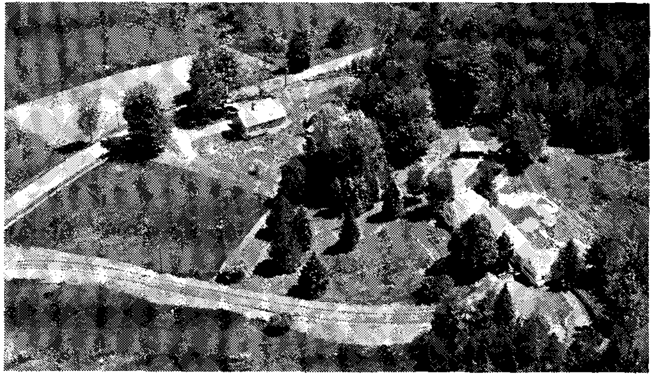

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erybody and kept everything;" Shakespeare, though personally "a pussycat," was a terrible writer ("He had the worst penmanship I ever saw"); Sigmund Freud was nothing more than a good basketball player; and, as for Michelangelo's painting, "I thought it stunk," because it showed naked people flying around, and "you can't hang a naked in your living room." Perhaps his most startling disclosure is that he cohabited with Joan of Arc. He volubly describes the ups and downs of their relationship, after which Reiner intervenes.

REINER: How did you feel about her being burnt at the stake?
BROOKS (*with instant, understated finality*): Terrible.

For me—and, I have discovered, for Brooks himself—this is the high point of the whole extravagant saga.

> Laughter becomes extreme only if it be consecutive. There must be no pauses for recovery.... The jester must be able to grapple his theme and hang on to it, twisting it this way and that, and making it yield magically all manner of strange and precious things, one after another, without pause. ***He must have invention keeping pace with utterance.*** He must be inexhaustible. Only so can he exhaust us.

The words are Max Beerbohm's, the italics mine. The Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man fulfills Beerbohm's demands to the letter. With this verdict Brooks, who is not noted for bashfulness, would probably agree. "Everybody knows," he has said of his work on these records, "that *that* is terrific stuff." It extracts a unique comic euphoria from a fundamentally pessimistic view of life. I've dwelt on it not only as a milestone in Brooks's past (and in the history of comedy) but as a signpost to which in the future he is likely to return for guidance.

EARLY in the nineteen-sixties, Brooks began to acquire a cult following. To the relatively small number of people who buy non-musical L.P.s he became, in his own words, "a royal personage, an emperor of comedy." In other respects, he remembers the years between 1959 and 1965 as "that terrible period when I couldn't get anything off the ground." In 1961, Jerry Lewis had an idea for a screenplay, "The Ladies Man," and hired Brooks to work on it. To Brooks's furious chagrin, Lewis took the script and had it entirely rewritten, so that few of Brooks's lines survived. (Show business offers few pleasures keener than that of paying tribute to a former foe who happens to be in eclipse. Brooks's present

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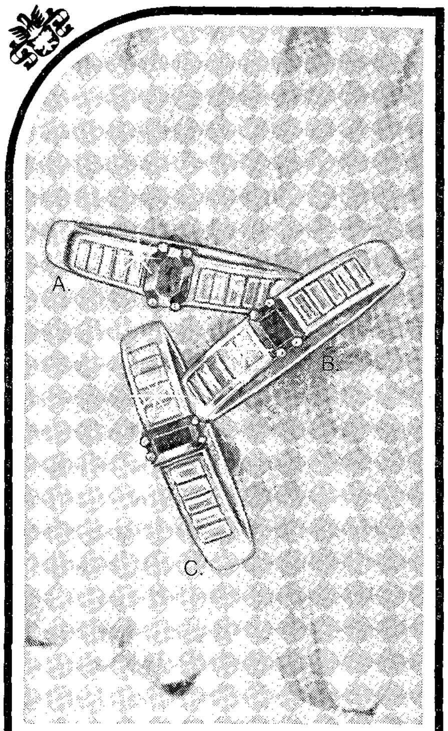

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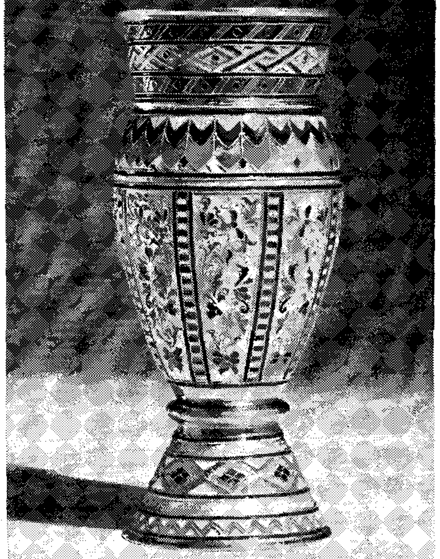

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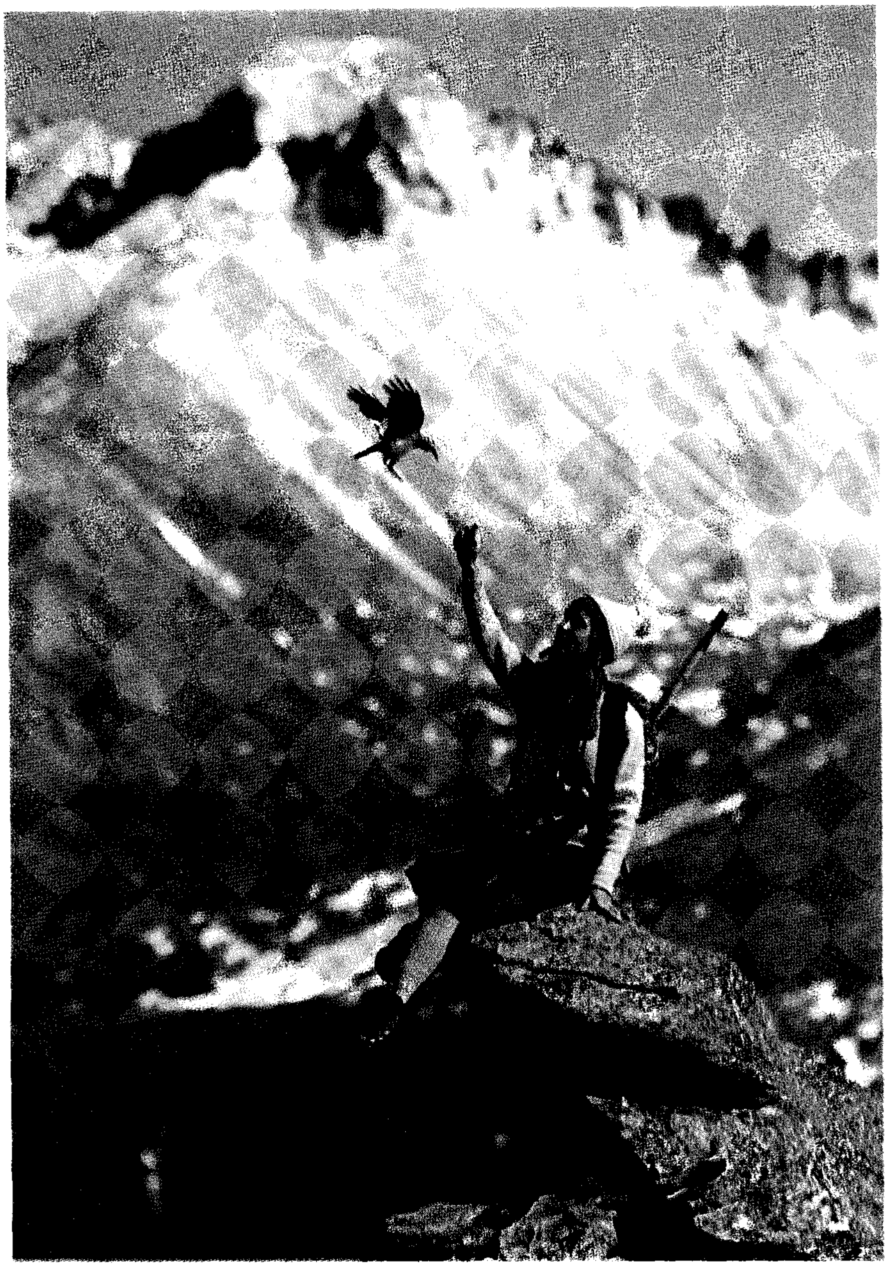

Working wife

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For six years I had been trying to capture the enclosed photo in Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park. Optimum lighting required shooting on a clear afternoon around June 21, when the sun is farthest north in the sky. I needed freshly-fallen snow for a contrasting background. I also needed a stiff wind blowing from the west so that, if a friendly large bird happened by, it could fly in the direction I desired. The wind would give the bird extra lift to fly fairly slowly. But too hard a gale would ground my feathered subjects.

With a 300 mm lens, I had to maintain significant depth of field while shooting at a speed fast enough to freeze the bird's motion. I insisted on Kodachrome film for its unbeatable color and absence of significant grain. But Kodachrome II film's ASA of 25 did not give me enough flexibility to combine all these requirements successfully, despite years of futile attempts.

After losing two previous models, I solved the problem of coaxing a model into this picture by marrying the prettiest rock climber I could find. But as years passed, Donna tired of ascending this rock. She could endure the bitter wind at 12,000 feet. But the fresh snow always melted to refreeze as a sheet of ice over her route up the cliff. And I pointed out that a protecting rope would spoil the photo's drama.

Finally, Donna delivered an ultimatum. She would climb the cliff once more. If I did not get my picture this time, I must choose: give up the photo or give up her.

I had been working on this photo for six years. I had been married only four. What choice would any dedicated photographer make?

But for the first time, I was using Kodachrome 64 film. The extra speed of this great film gave me the flexibility needed to capture at last a photo of the quality I had envisioned. Thank you, Kodak, for saving my marriage.

Sincerely,
Kent Dannen
Estes Park, Colorado

The lady, it now turns out, was helping bring in some income. We have purchased the right to use the picture to suggest to others the possibility of imaginative originality in family photography, even without getting that close to Long's Peak, the tallest in Rocky Mountain National Park. Two additional points:

1. Matching Mr. Dannen's enthusiasm for Kodachrome film, some other serious photographers are just as enthusiastic about Kodak Ektachrome 64, 200, and 400 films. The latter two provide even more speed and are less demanding in their processing requirements. You can even process them at home. Might be fun. Ask your dealer.
2. The bird is a Clark's nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*). The species nests below treeline but obviously can be lured above it by memory of past rewards from an extended human arm. There's a second on the rock. See it?

Kodak

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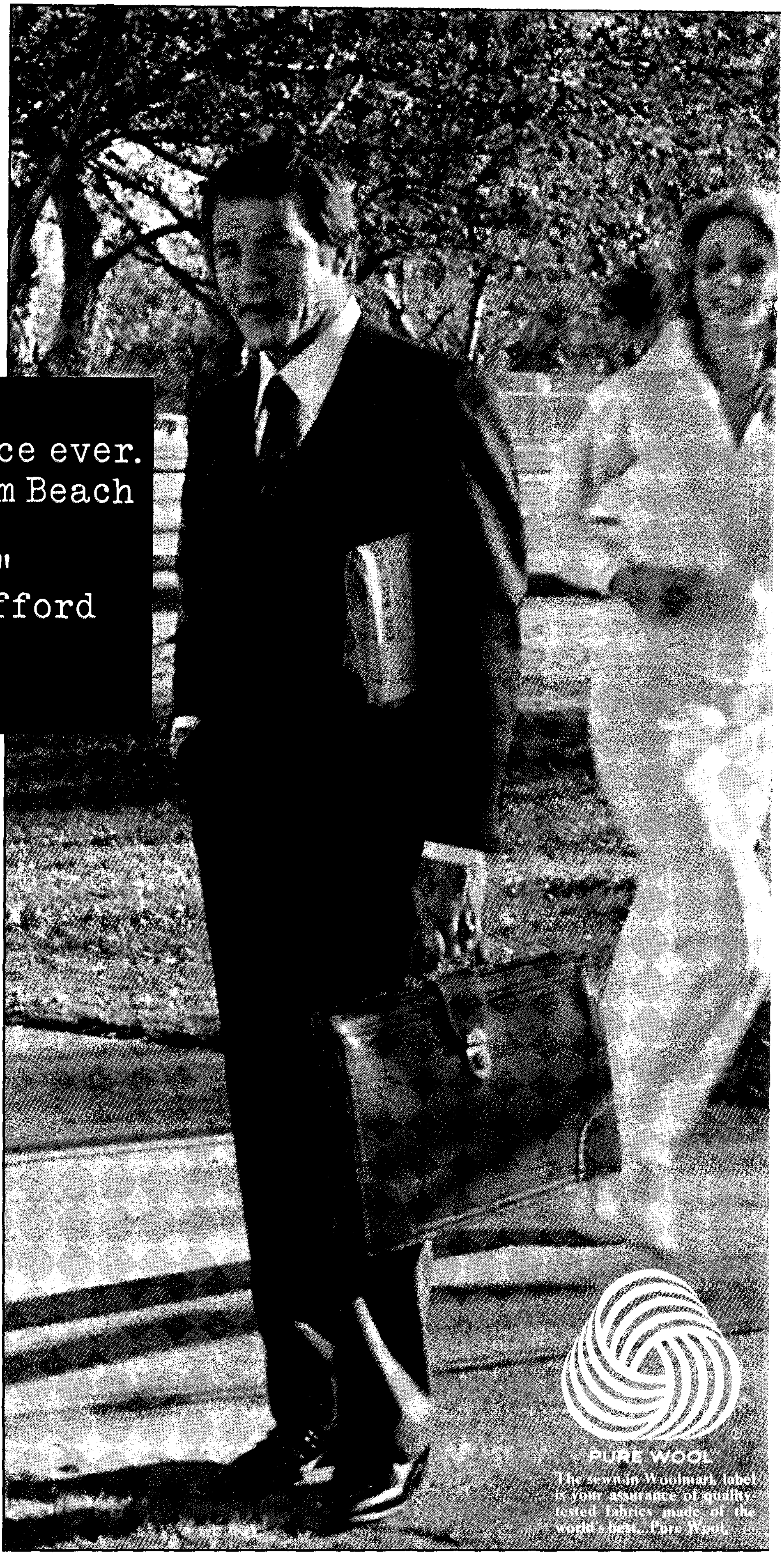

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opinion of Lewis is that "he was an exciting, dynamic creature, and I learned a lot from him." He cannot, however, resist adding, "High-key comics like that always burn themselves out. Lewis could do thirty-one different takes [i.e., physical reactions], and when you'd seen them all, that was it. Low-key, laid-back comics like Jack Benny are the ones that last." Moreover, Lewis stooped to sentimentality—something utterly foreign to Brooks. Gene Wilder told me, "There's not much white sugar in Mel's veins. He would never ask an audience for sympathy.") For some time, Brooks had been working on a novel; he now revamped it as a play, called "Springtime for Hitler." No producer would touch it. "All American," a Broadway musical with a book by Brooks, was among the more resounding flops of 1962. In the same year, during which his divorce became final, he turned out another screenplay, entitled "Marriage Is a Dirty Rotten Fraud." Nobody bought it. Meanwhile, most of his colleagues on the Caesar shows were prospering—a fact that neither escaped his attention nor soothed his frustration.

After separating from his wife in 1960, Brooks had spent a bleak and insolvent period in an unfurnished fourth-floor walkup on Perry Street, for which he paid seventy-eight dollars a month. He then moved in with a friend called Speed Vogel, who had an apartment on Central Park West and a studio on West Twenty-eighth Street, where he made what Brooks describes as "direct metal sculpture." Vogel had left his wife shortly before Brooks arrived. The two men cooked for themselves, carried their clothes to the laundromat, rose at conflicting hours (Brooks late, Vogel early), and bickered over practically every aspect of housekeeping—a setup uncannily prophetic of Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple."

One Tuesday in the summer of 1962, Vogel gave a party at West Twenty-eighth Street. Among his guests were Zero Mostel, who had a studio in the same building; Joseph Heller, whose first novel, "Catch-22," had appeared the previous year; and Ngoot Lee, a painter and calligrapher of Chinese parentage. These three, together with Vogel and Brooks, enjoyed one another's company so much that they decided to commemorate the occasion by reassembling every Tuesday for food and talk. Meetings were held at cheap Chinese restaurants selected by Ngoot Lee, who knew where the best chefs worked, and kept track of their movements from job to job. The nucleus, itself a fairly motley crew, grew steadily motleyer as it swelled in numbers. Brooks introduced a diamond dealer named Julius Green, who could do eccentric impersonations of movie stars. Heller contributed a fellow-novelist, George Mandel, who had a steel plate in his head as a result of injuries suffered in the Battle of the Bulge. "One night," Heller recalls, "Mandel told us in detail how he had been wounded. There was a long pause, and then Mel did something typical. He said, very slowly, 'I'm sure glad that happened to you, and not to me.' He wasn't being cruel, he was being honest. He just blurted out what we were all thinking but didn't dare to say." Mandel, in turn, brought in Mario Puzo, later to become famous as the author of "The Godfather." These were the charter members of the fraternity. They called themselves the Group of the Oblong Table or, in more pretentious moments, the Chinese Gourmet Club. What bound them together, apart from revelry in conversation, is best epitomized in a statement volunteered to me by Heller. "I'd rather have a bad meal out than a good meal at home," he said. "When you're out, it's a party. Also, I like a big mediocre meal more than a small good one."

The membership list has been closed for many years. Approved outsiders, like Carl Reiner and Joseph Stein, are invited to the Oblong Table from time to time, but merely as "honored guests." The club has strict rules, some of which I learned from Reiner: "You are not allowed to eat two mouthfuls of fish, meat, or chicken without an intermediate mouthful of rice. Otherwise, you would be consuming only the expensive food. The check and tip, and the parking fees, if any, are equally divided among the members. It is compulsory, if you are in New York, are not working nights, and are in reasonable health, to be present at every meeting." He continued, "The members are very polite. Once, I had a seat facing the kitchen door and I looked through and saw a rat strolling across the floor. They immediately offered me a chair facing the other way." Anxious to retain his status of "honored guest," Reiner begged me to quote Heller and Brooks on the subject at greater length than I quoted him.

Brooks recently told an interviewer

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that the talk at the Oblong Table dealt mainly with such weighty subjects as "whether there is a God, what is a Jew, and do homosexuals really do it." Reiner has other recollections. "From the sessions I've attended," he said to me, "I would put that group up against the Algonquin Round Table and bet that, line for line, they were funnier. The speed of the wit is breathtaking. It just flies back and forth." Brooks's comment on this: "I'm sure we're funnier than the Algonquin crowd, but we're not as bright."

Hershy Kay, the composer and Broadway arranger, had a bitter experience that confirmed what Reiner said about the club's rigorous eating procedure. According to Brooks: "Hershy Kay came once as a guest and took the nicest bits of the lobster and the choicest parts of the chicken, including the wings, which I like. He did not touch his rice. He had to go, and he went." There may, however, have been another reason for Kay's rejection. My source here is Heller, who said, "Bear in mind that I am the only tall member of the group. At the next meeting after the Hershy Kay incident, Mel made a little speech. 'Let's face it,' he said. 'Except for Joe, all of us are quite short. Some of us are very short. *Hershy is too short.*' "

Brooks, incidentally, has grave reservations about Heller's own table manners. "From the very start," he declares, "we accepted Joe on Speed Vogel's word that he would behave, and Speed lied to us, because he did not behave. He took the best pieces of everything and laughed in our faces. One Tuesday, we ordered a tureen of special soup full of delicious things, and Joe grabbed it, scooped all the good stuff into his own bowl, and then said, 'Here, let me serve this.' We each got a spoonful of nothing."

Far from denying this story, Heller openly confesses, "I am a greedy man. I'll eat anything. I even use a fork instead of chopsticks, so I can eat faster. I'm known in the club as the plague of locusts." Presumably, his physical bulk protects him against reprisals.

Puzo, the only non-Jewish member other than Ngoot Lee, is tolerated because of his limited appetite. "Being Italian, Puzo is no threat to us," Brooks says. "He doesn't really like exotic dishes. He prefers noodles and rice—things that remind him of home. He is provincial, and that saves us from the rape of our best food." A stickler for party discipline as well as a dedicated glutton, Brooks never misses a club meeting when he is in Manhattan. If

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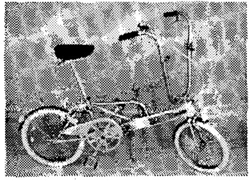

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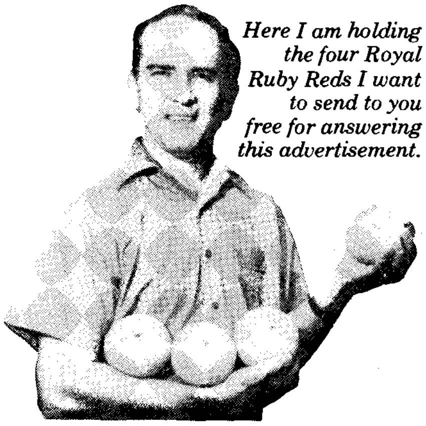
And when we pick the fruit we're just as fussy. Every one of us takes a "picking ring" when we harvest. If the fruit is small enough to pass through this ring — we don't pick it! It simply isn't big enough to qualify as a Royal Ruby Red!

This is a picture of the actual harvest of this season's first Ruby Reds.

Even after picking there are other careful inspections each fruit must pass before I'll accept it. I size the fruit. And I grade it for beauty. Sometimes the fruit will be wind scarred. I won't accept it. Or sometimes it will have a bulge on the stem end that we call "sheep nose." I won't accept it. You can see I really mean it when I say I accept only **perfect** Royal Ruby Reds.

When I realized that the Royal Ruby Reds were the ultimate fruit, I decided to form a club and sell only to my club members. In this manner I can control my production to insure that nobody will be disappointed.

But before I ask you to join my club, I want you to sample my Royal Ruby Reds for yourself, at no cost to you whatsoever. Let me send you a box prepaid of 16 to 20 Royal Ruby Reds. Place four of them in your refrigerator until they are thoroughly cool. Then cut them in half and have your family sample this unusual fruit.



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business suddenly compels him to fly in from the Coast on a Tuesday evening, his first act on arrival at J.F.K. is to ring every eligible restaurant in Chinatown until he finds the chosen venue. Thither he dashes, straight from the airport; and before saying a word he heaps a plate with whatever is left.

Despite their differences over matters of etiquette, Heller has a high respect for Brooks. He freely admitted to me that he used a lot of Brooks's lines in his second novel, "Something Happened," and that in his next book, "Good as Gold," "the hero is a small Jewish guy, and there's a great deal of Mel in that." In the early seventies, Heller was teaching writing at City College of New York. He had long been aware that Brooks was vulnerable to practical jokes. One evening, Heller casually lied about his salary, saying that it was sixty-eight thousand dollars a year—more than double the truth. A couple of days later, Heller's accountant, who also worked for Brooks, called him up and said, "For God's sake, Joe, what the hell have you done? First thing this morning, Mel was up here screaming, 'Why am I in the entertainment business? Why aren't I teaching and earning seventy thousand a year like Joe Heller?' He was out of his mind!" Having told me this story, Heller went on, "Mel has always had plenty of resentment and aggression that he can sublimate into creativity. He's usually at his best when he's envying people more successful than he is. Now that there's hardly anyone more successful, what will he do?"

I cited a mot attributed to Gore Vidal: "It is not enough to succeed. Others must fail."

"I thought that was La Rochefoucauld," Heller said. "But anyway it doesn't apply to Mel. He likes to see his rivals fail, but not his friends. Provided, of course, that *he's* succeeding."

I asked whether, in Heller's opinion, fame had changed Brooks.

"Not a bit. He's just as nasty, hostile, acquisitive, and envious today as he ever was. Please be sure to quote me on that," Heller said warmly. He went on, "You have to distinguish between Mel the entertainer and Mel the private person. He puts on this manic public performance, but it's an act, it's something sought for and worked on. When he's being himself, he'll talk quietly for hours and then make a remark that's unforgettably funny because it comes out of a real situation. You might say that he's at his funniest when he's being most

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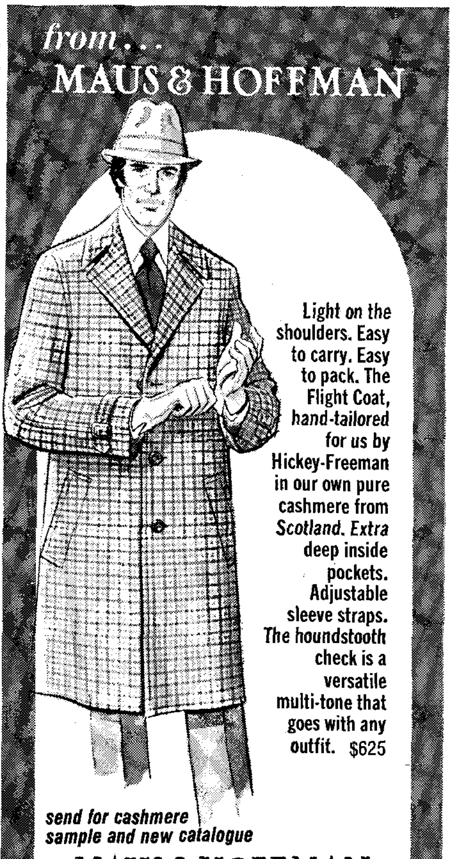

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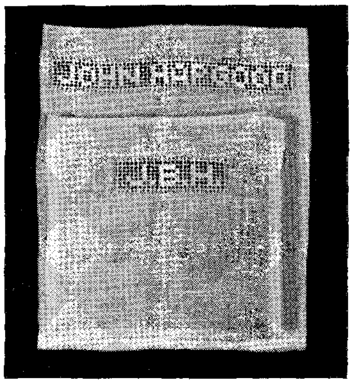

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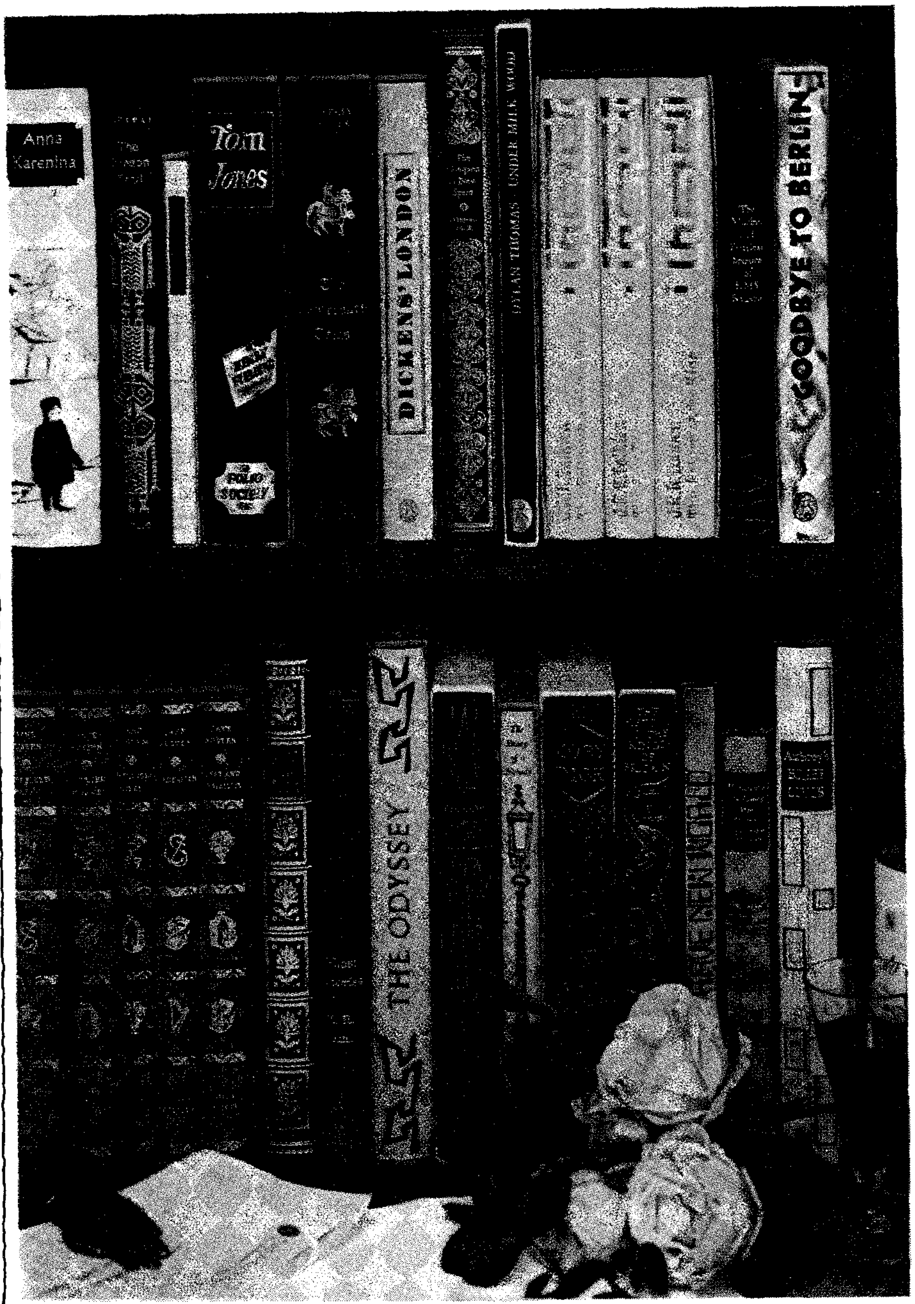
serious. He has a tremendous reverence for novelists and for literature in general, because it involves something more than gag writing. In his serious moments, I don't think he regards movies as an art. For Mel, the real art is literature."

Brooks staunchly challenges this view: "When Joe says things like that, he's just electioneering for the novel, because that's what he writes. I think 'La Grande Illusion' is as good as 'Anna Karenina,' and 'Les Enfants du Paradis' is in the same class as 'La Chartreuse de Parme.' If we're talking about art at the most exquisite level, Joe may conceivably have a point. But I'm a populist. I want color, I want visual images, I want the sound of the human voice."

In February, 1961, Brooks attended a rehearsal of a Perry Como TV special in which Anne Bancroft, then starring on Broadway in "The Miracle Worker," was making a guest appearance. Brashly introducing himself, Brooks started to woo her on the spot. They were married in 1964 and are still together, now accompanied by a six-year-old son—"Mel in miniature," according to Miss Bancroft—named Maximilian. "On our second date," Brooks told me, "I asked her, 'Where do you keep your awards?' She'd already won two Tonys. She said she gave them to her mother. I said, 'Funny, so do I'—although the only thing I'd won up to then was a Writers Guild Award for 'Your Show of Shows.' Then I asked her, 'Where does your mother keep them?' She said, 'On top of the TV set.' My heart stopped, and I said, 'So does mine.' My mother now has two Oscars and an Emmy. But Annie has something like thirty major awards—Oscars, Emmys, Tonys, Cannes Festival, about everything an actress can win." Miss Bancroft, whose parents were the children of immigrants, was christened Anna Maria Louisa Italiano, and it took Brooks a long time to reveal to his mother that he intended to marry an Italian girl. If we believe (as we can't) the account he gave David Susskind on TV, his mother's reaction when he finally broke the news and announced that he was bringing his lasagna-loving fiancée over to meet her was simply to say, "That's fine. I'll be in the kitchen; my head'll be in the oven."

In the early sixties, Miss Bancroft was continuously working, either on Broadway or in movies. Brooks had many evenings to kill, and she suspects that this may explain why he founded



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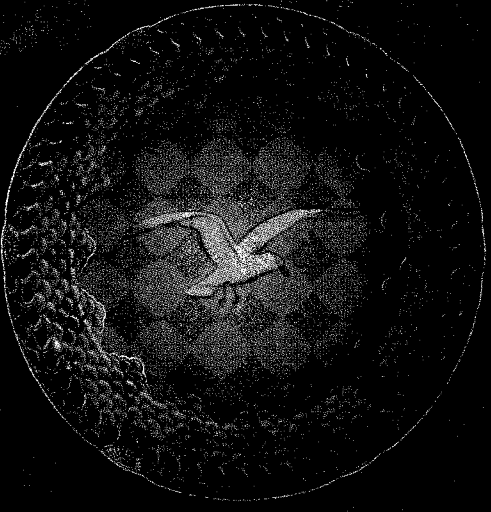

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the Chinese Gourmet Club. "But in any case Mel really loves men, he has a terrific sense of male camaraderie," she said to me recently. "Have you noticed how all his films before 'High Anxiety' end up with two men together? His attitude toward women can be very primitive. When we have big rows, he yells, 'No more monogamy with women for me! Next time, it'll be with a man!' He actually threatens me with Dom DeLuise! Once—and only once—I managed to find out where the club was meeting, and I crashed the dinner. As soon as I came in the restaurant, it was as if a blanket had descended on the gathering. Dead silence. Faces falling. I turned around and left, without eating." She smiled and shrugged. "All the same," she said, "whenever he comes home at night the whole place lights up. He's like an incandescent schoolboy. There are no dull moments."

ONE evening in the spring of 1962, Brooks was sitting in a Manhattan movie theatre watching a dazzling abstract cartoon by the Canadian animator Norman MacLaren. "Three rows behind me," he recalls, "there was an old immigrant man mumbling to himself. He was very unhappy, because he was waiting for a story line and he wasn't getting one." Brooks listened hard, and the result of his eavesdropping was that, for the first time, a film based on a Brooks idea actually got made. "I asked my pal Ernie Pintoff to do the visuals for a MacLaren-type cartoon," he says. "I told him, 'Don't let me see the images in advance. Just give me a mike and let them assault me.' And that's what he did. There was no script. I sat in a viewing theatre looking at what Ernie showed me, and I mumbled whatever I felt that that old guy would have mumbled, trying to find a plot in this maze of abstractions. We cut it down to three and a half minutes and called it 'The Critic.' It opened at the Sutton in New York, later to become renowned as the home of Mel Brooks hits. It was a smash then and has been ever since." In 1964, it won Academy Awards for both Brooks and Pintoff. A fact to remember: the film's comic impact was entirely dependent on something non-visual—Brooks's mesmeric power of vocal improvisation.

Alan Schwartz, an urbane, silver-haired native of Brooklyn who has been Brooks's legal adviser and friend since 1962, said to me not long ago, "By Mel's standards, an improviser isn't class. He wanted to be classy. Writing is classy. A screenplay is classy." Schwartz's other clients include Joseph Heller, Peter Shaffer, and Tom Stoppard. "Mel is as intelligent as any of them," he says. "He must have a fantastic I.Q. But sometimes, if he's with playwrights or novelists, he feels he has to prove that he's a serious literary person. When he met Shaffer, for instance, he kept saying things like 'pari passu' and 'ipso facto.' "

Brooks's return to the affluence of network TV came in 1965, when he collaborated with Buck Henry on "Get Smart," a series of half-hour episodes from the career of a dangerously incompetent secret agent named Maxwell Smart. ABC, which financed the pilot script, found the central character too charmless and the satiric twists too bizarre. NBC took over the project (which nowadays looks tame enough), and it became a long-running success, relieving Brooks of such urgent financial worries as alimony and child support. It also left behind it a heritage of bad blood between Brooks and his co-author. Buck Henry, who wrote the screenplay of "The Graduate" a couple of years later, resented the billing he received on "Get Smart"—"By Mel Brooks with Buck Henry"—and there were rumors that, once the series was launched, Brooks's main contribution was to arrive at an advanced stage of rehearsals, propose a few radical and impracticable changes, and then disappear. Rebutting the charge of self-aggrandizement, Brooks says that his agent wanted to exclude Henry's name altogether and that it was he who demanded that both names should appear. "Buck envied me because of the hit I'd made with the Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man," Brooks asserts. "I'd galloped like a greedy child, and got ahead and taken off. I had a reputation for being a crazy Jew animal, whereas Buck thought of himself as an intellectual. Well, I was an intellectual, too. I knew that Dante's last name was Alighieri, but I didn't flaunt it. What Buck couldn't bear was the idea of this wacko Jew being billed over him. The truth is that he reads magazines but he's not an intellectual, he's a pedant."

Time has not softened Henry's reciprocal animosity toward Brooks. "I'll bet you," he said to me in 1977, "that his name appears five times on the credits of 'High Anxiety.' "

Informed of this, Brooks replied, "Tell him from me he's wrong. The correct number is six."

"The Producers," shot in New

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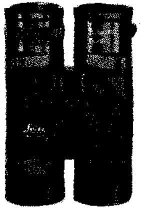

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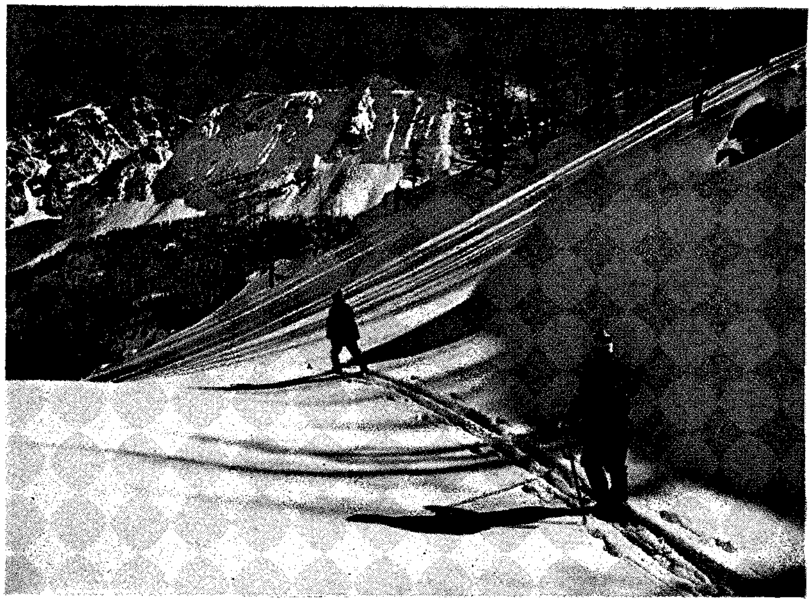

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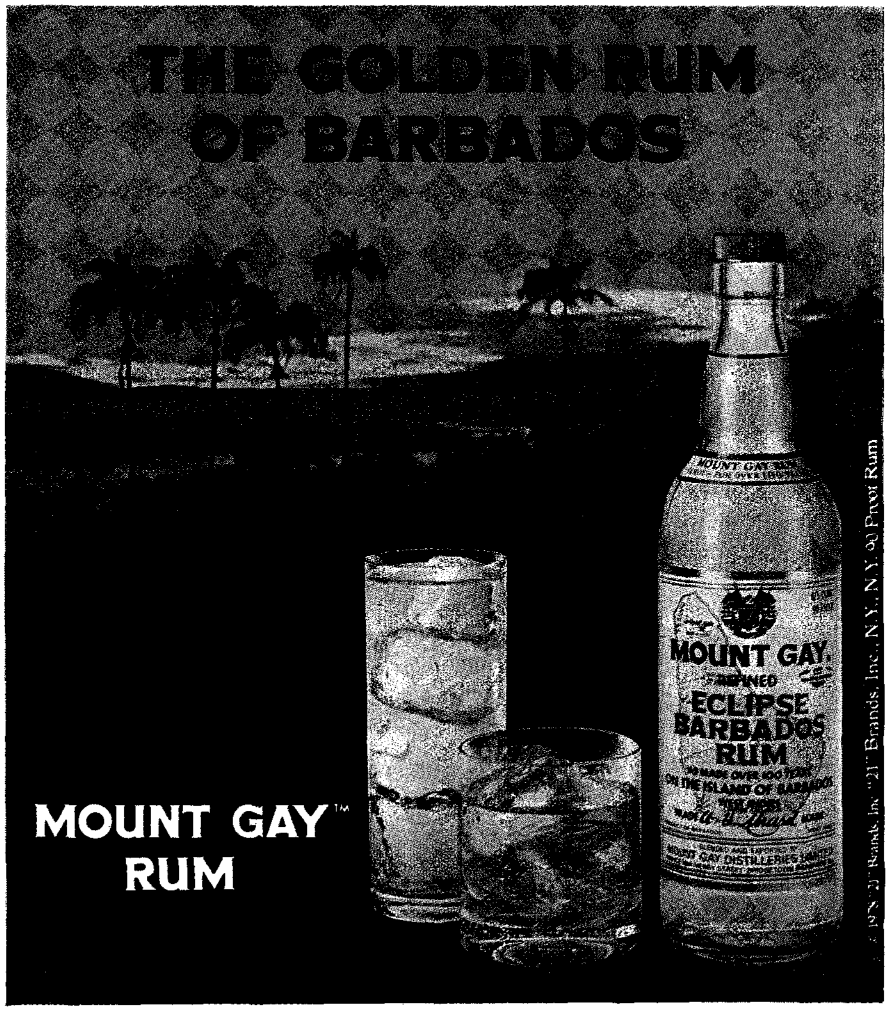
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York in 1967, was the first Brooks script to reach the movie screen. It also marked his début as a director—a job he undertook out of no sense of vocation but simply to protect his work against the well-meaning vandalism of rewrite experts. The script had gone through a strangely protracted gestation period. Brooks had originally conceived it, more than ten years earlier, as a novel. He had never thought of himself as a writer until 1950, when he saw his name on the credits of "Your Show of Shows." "I got scared," he told me, "and I figured I'd better find out what these bastards do. I went to the library, and read all the books I could carry—Conrad, Fielding, Dostoevski, Gogol, Tolstoy. I decided that Tolstoy was the most gifted writer who ever lived. It's like he stuck a pen in his heart and it didn't even go through his mind on its way to the page. He may not even have been talented. And I said to myself, 'My God, I'm not a writer, I'm a *talker*.' I wished they'd change my billing on the show so that it said 'Funny Talking by Mel Brooks.' Then I wouldn't feel so intimidated." Before long, however, he stifled his fears and embarked on a novel. "One little word at a time, but, by God, I was going to do it."

The title was "Springtime for Hitler," and the hero was a nervous young accountant called Leopold Bloom. "I stole the name from 'Ulysses,'" Brooks said to me. "I don't know what it meant to James Joyce, but to me Leo Bloom always meant a vulnerable Jew with curly hair. In the course of any narrative, the major characters have to metamorphose. They have to go through an experience that forces them to learn something and change. So Leo was going to change, he was going to bloom. He would start out as a little man who salutes whatever society teaches him to salute. Hats are worn. Yes, sir, I will wear a hat. Ties are worn. Definitely, sir. No dirty language is spoken in this world. *Absolument*, *Monsieur*. But in Leo Bloom's heart there was a much more complicated and protean creature—the guy he'd never dare to be, because he ain't gonna take them chances. He was going to play it straight and trudge right to his grave, until he ran into Max Bialystock, the Zero Mostel character. Bialystock is a Broadway producer who's so broke he's wearing a cardboard belt. He sleeps with little old ladies on their way to the cemetery. They stop off to have quick affairs on the leather couch in his office, which charm them so much that they write out checks for any fictitious show he claims to be promoting. Compared with Bloom, Bialystock is the Id. Bite, kiss, take, grab, lavish, urinate—whatever you can do that's physical, he will do. When Bloom first meets him, he's appalled. But then they get embroiled in each other's lives, and they catalyze each other. Bialystock has a profound effect on Bloom—so much so that this innocent young guy comes up with the idea of making a fortune by producing a surefire flop and selling twenty-five thousand per cent of the profits in advance to little old ladies. On the other hand, Bloom evokes the first sparks of decency and humanity in Bialystock. It was a nice give and take. But after a while all they did was talk to each other. So I said, 'Oh, Christ, it's turning into a play,' and I rewrote it, with a big neo-Nazi musical number right in the middle."

At this point (1963), Anne Bancroft was appearing on Broadway in the title role of Brecht's "Mother Courage." Gene Wilder played the Chaplain, her hanger-on and would-be bedfellow. He is now Brooks's closest friend and most impassioned fan. "Whenever Mel says 'Let's go,' " he told me recently, "I drop anything I'm doing and follow him." They met backstage during the run of the Brecht play. "Anne introduced me to this little borscht-belt comic she was going with," Wilder recalls. "I knew his name from the Caesar shows, which I'd been brought up on. I used to do Caesar impersonations at junior high, and it turned out that all my favorite bits had been written by Mel. Now he started to give me advice on Brechtian acting. The Chaplain has these ironic speeches and lyrics about war and injustice, and I didn't know how to handle them. Mel said to me, 'Don't try to work them out in terms of psychology and motivation. He's stopped his play to pamphleteer. Step out of character and treat them like song-and-dance routines.' I didn't agree with him then, but I do now. Without knowing it, he was talking pure Brechtian technique. One day, we went out to Fire Island, and he said, 'I've written a play with a terrific part for you.' He read me the first twenty minutes and I was knocked out. Brooks told me, 'You *are* that character, and if it's ever done on stage or screen you're going to play it! But that's an easy promise, because I've never written a play or a screenplay and you've never had a starring role in a movie, so let's just dream together and eat warm pretzels and drink beer

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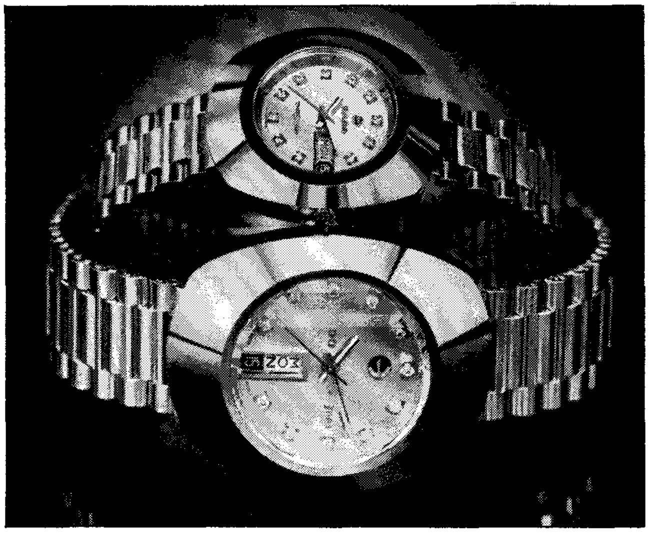

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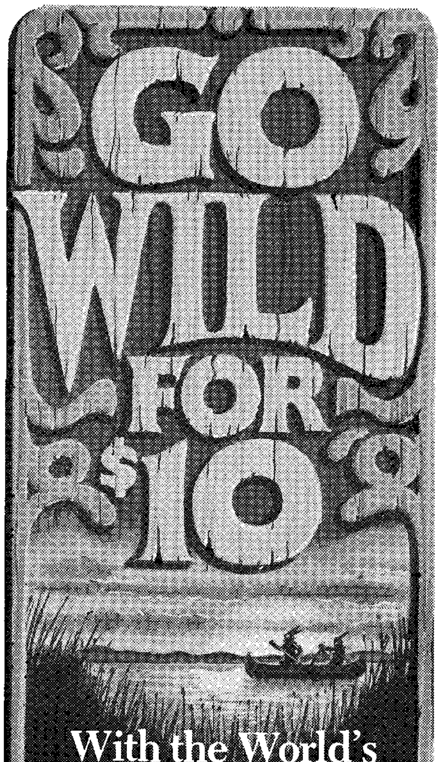

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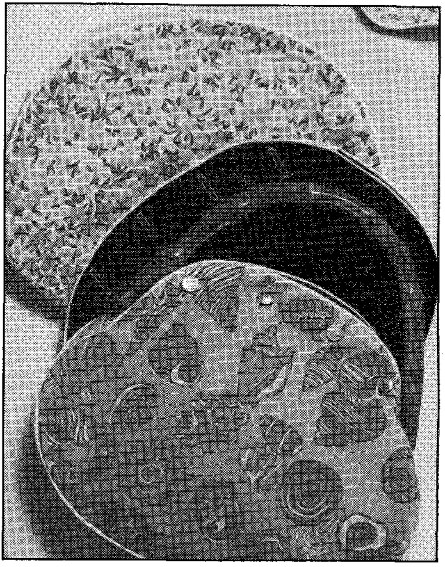
and think about reaching the stars.' Even so, he made me swear not to take any other job without checking with him. Not long afterward, I was offered a part in the Broadway production of 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.' I told Mel, and he made me write a month's release clause into my contract, which I did. Then *three years* passed, during which—nothing. He didn't even call me. Finally, I'm back on Broadway, in Murray Schisgal's play 'Luv.' After a matinée, there's a knock on my dressing-room door, and it's Mel. 'You didn't think I forgot, did you?' he says. Then he explains that 'Springtime for Hitler' has become a movie and that I'm going to play Leopold Bloom. I took the script home and read it, and at 3 A.M. I called him and said, 'It's magnificent! When do we start?' I didn't ask about my salary, and I don't think I ever did."

What had happened in the lengthy interim was that Brooks had found the action of his play spreading all over New York, spilling out onto sidewalks and rooftops, leaping from place to place with a spatial flexibility for which film seemed the obvious form. Helped by an inventive secretary with the arresting name of Alfa-Betty Olsen, he had refashioned it as a movie. Several agents had "run with it"—to lapse into Hollywood patois—and got nowhere. It had then come into the hands of Sidney Glazier, a fund-raiser and contact man who had won an Academy Award for producing "The Eleanor Roosevelt Story." Brooks describes Glazier, whom he met on Fire Island, as "a crazy man, he drank and he bellowed, he faced the ocean and roared like a sea lion." Glazier had ordered Brooks not to read the script to him but simply to tell him the story. "About halfway through," Brooks continues, "Sidney was drinking coffee and he laughed so much it went up his nose. He fell on the floor, snorting and coughing. As he rolled around, he stuck up his arm, and when I reached out for it he grabbed my hand and said, 'We're going to make this movie. It's the funniest thing I ever heard.' And he knew what an impossible deal I was demanding: My first condition was that I had to direct the picture." Glazier budgeted the production at a million dollars, supplied half of it through his own company, and ran with the script around all the major studios. No dice. He eventually appealed to the independent producer Joseph E. Levine, who had just raised what he claimed was the last cent at his disposal to finance an extremely risky project called "The Graduate." Like every other money-



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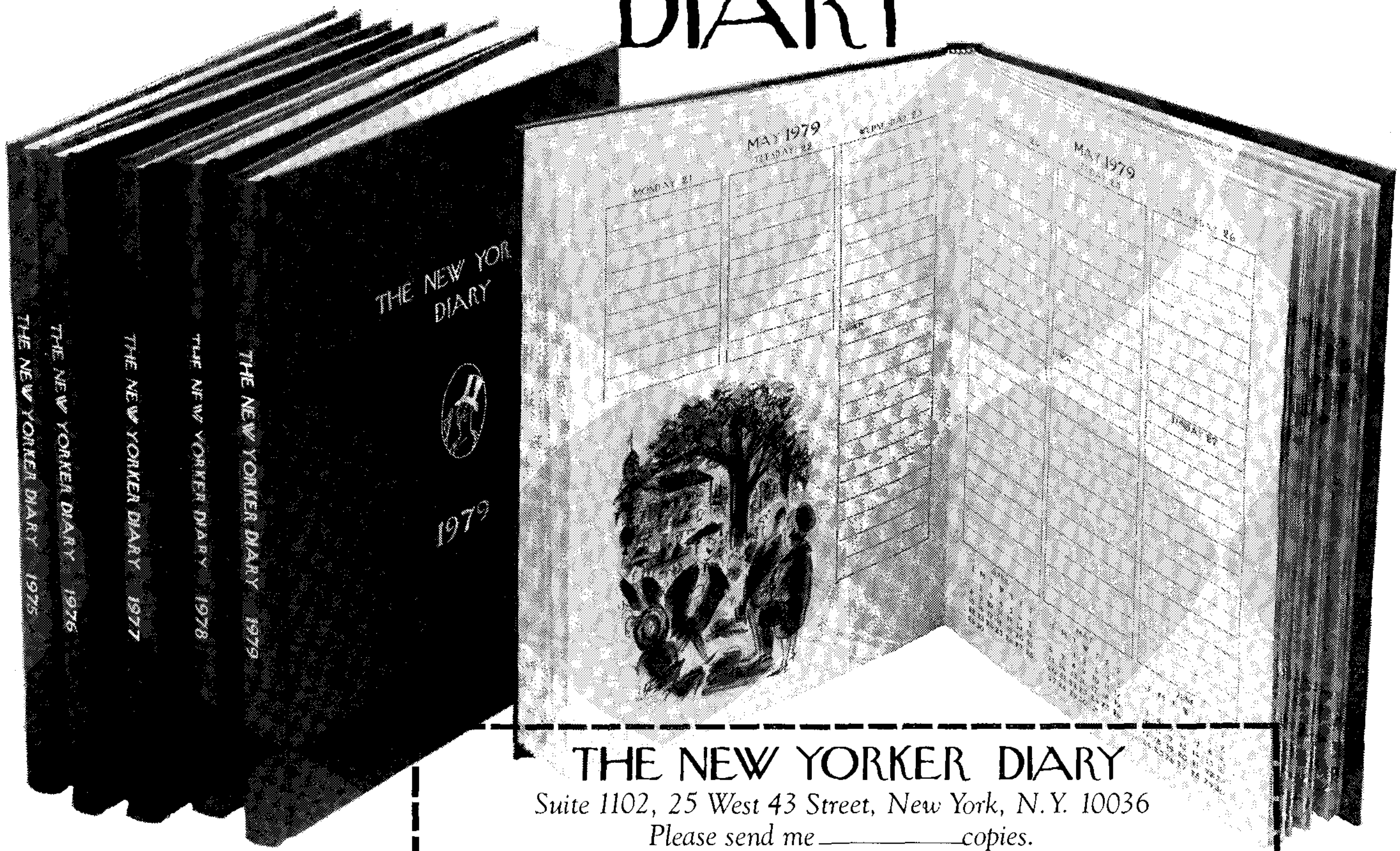
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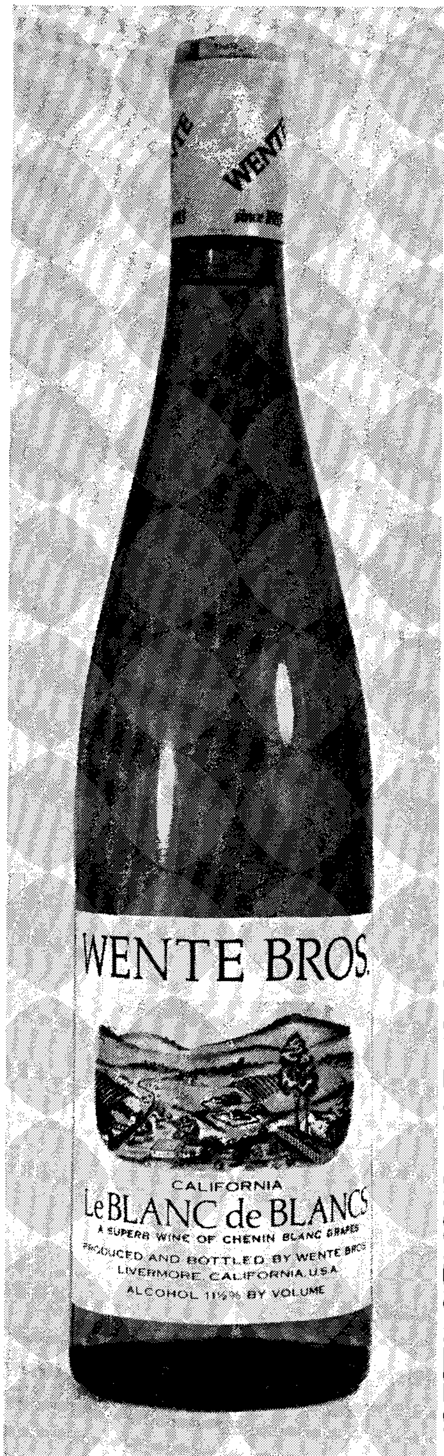

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man who had seen the script, Levine said that no Jewish exhibitor would put "Springtime for Hitler" on his marquee. Brooks, for his part, rejected the suggestion that it should be retitled "Springtime for Mussolini." By now, however, he was reluctantly prepared to settle for something as neutral as "The Producers." There was one major point in Levine's favor: he genuinely liked what Brooks had written. Against this was the fact that he could not see his way to hiring the author as director.

Desperate to resolve these matters, Glazier brought the two men together over lunch. "I ate very nicely," Brooks says. "Nothing dropped out of my mouth. I didn't eat bread and butter, because I didn't know whether you should cut the bread or break it. Meanwhile, Joe Levine ate like an animal. Just on top of some trout, he said, 'What would you do if I said yes? Could you direct it? What do you say, kid? Tell me from your heart. Don't lie to me; it may be the end for me.' He was impressed with me because I was cute and funny, so I said 'Yes, I can do it.' And he said 'O.K.,' and we shook hands." (Long after the film was made, Levine admitted to Brooks, "I was wrong. We should have called it 'Springtime for Hitler.' " Brooks told me, "Actually, they did call it 'Springtime for Hitler' in Sweden. And when 'The Twelve Chairs' came out, they called it 'Springtime for the Twelve Chairs.' 'Blazing Saddles' was 'Springtime for the Sheriff,' 'Young Frankenstein' was 'Springtime for Frankenstein,' and 'High Anxiety' is 'Springtime for the Lunatics.' I'm big stuff in Sweden. Everything is springtime there.")

Ten years from conception to handshake, and still not an actor signed: such is the life-devouring pace at which the movie business conducts its affairs. A deal with Gene Wilder was quickly concluded, but Zero Mostel, whom Brooks had always wanted for the role of Bialystock, read the script with mounting horror. "What is this?" he bellowed to Brooks. "A Jewish producer going to bed with old women on the brink of the grave? I can't play such a part. I'm a Jewish person." Enlisting the support of Mostel's wife, Brooks finally managed to change his mind, but their working relationship, once shooting (and shouting) began, was not easy. Between takes, Mostel would be found lying in his dressing room like a beached whale, moaning, "That man is going to kill me! He keeps saying, 'Do it again.' "

According to Brooks: "He was won-

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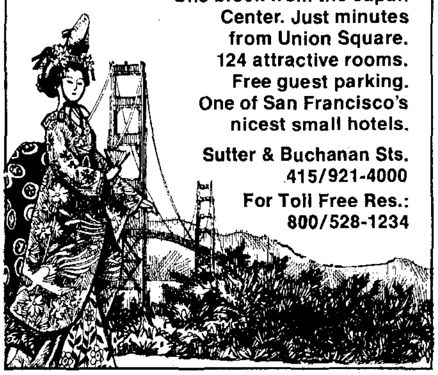

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THE NEW YORKER 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036 derful and he was a great friend, and he was a great pain in the ass. It was like working in the middle of a thunderstorm. Bolts of Zero—blinding flashes of Zero—were all around you. When he wasn't *on*, he was very dear, very pensive, very accessible. We had family feuds. He had a sense of the grandeur of an artist. He had what I like in an actor—power, stature, and enormous bravery. I knew that if I could reach the end of the solar system of his talent, if I could just prod him into some outburst of insane anger, I could wake up the sleeping emotional depths of that extraordinary man. And I did, and, although he protested bitterly, he was fabulous."

The picture took eight weeks to shoot and eleven months to edit: Brooks was then learning his trade. Nowadays, he gets through the editing period in about four months. "The Producers" was brought in under budget, at nine hundred and forty-one thousand dollars. It opened in 1968 and, despite murderous notices, acquired a cult reputation that enabled it to creep into the black within four years. Brooks has little faith in critics, believing that they always catch up with him one movie too late. "I never got good reviews in my life and I never will," he declares. "They took one look at 'The Producers' and said it stank. Then I gave them 'The Twelve Chairs' and they said it lacked the great chaotic buoyancy of that majestic triumph 'The Producers.' Then came 'Blazing Saddles,' and they said that everything I'd learned about films had been forgotten in this disgusting mess."

Badly wounded by the reception of his maiden effort, Brooks was resoundingly compensated by the members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, who, showing an unusual disdain for the opinions of both the press and the general public, awarded him the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay of 1968. It was a bold and unexpected choice. In order to enjoy "The Producers," you have to cultivate a taste for grotesque and deliberate overstatement. In the early scenes, Mostel and Wilder play together like figures out of a Jonsonian comedy of humors. Cupidity (Mostel) seduces Conformity (Wilder): in each, a single trait is exaggerated to the point of plethoric obsession, and beyond. These are cartoon creatures, whose dialogue seems to be written in capital letters, heavily italicized. To say that this makes it too "theatrical" is irrelevant, for as soon as we agree to abandon the convention of naturalism anything

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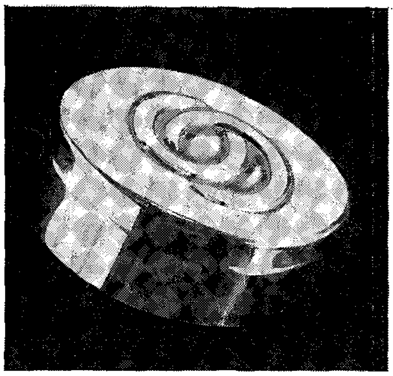

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goes, and the screen can be as unrealistic as the stage. (Who complains, after all, that the Marx Brothers' "Cocoanuts" is merely a photographed stage production?) The film's peak is the sequence, already a modern classic, in which a chorus of Storm Troopers, shot from above à la Busby Berkeley, sings "Springtime for Hitler"—a lilting melody composed by Brooks—while revolving in swastika formation. Afterward, everything runs downhill. The idea of playing the Führer as a Southern redneck high on flower power and L.S.D. not only mixes up too many incompatible jokes but destroys the bedrock plausibility of plot without which even the looniest farce collapses. Like most of Brooks's work for the cinema, "The Producers" shows him at his best and at his worst.

ACADEMY AWARD notwithstanding, there was no stampede in the movie industry for Brooks's services. His fame is now so widespread that we tend to forget (though he does not) how recent its origins are. It was not until 1974, with "Blazing Saddles," that the days of wine and grosses began. His second picture, "The Twelve Chairs," opened in 1970, nearly three frustrating years after "The Producers," and crashed to immediate box-office failure. It was based on a satirical Soviet novel of the nineteen-twenties, by Ilya Ilf and Eugene Petrov. Like "The Producers," it dealt with greed—the prize in this case being a hoard of diamonds concealed in one of a dozen chairs that are confiscated from a palace during the revolution. Again, the characters are raging obsessives, with the difference that here the model is Gogol rather than Jonson. The atmosphere of rural Russia is lovingly evoked, and Brooks himself, making his movie début, is superb in the minor role of a masochistic, vodka-sodden caretaker with an insatiable yearning for the good old days of servitude. Yet the film as a whole never comes to life; its jokes seem shod with lead, and one watches glumly as, like the wounded snake in Pope's poem, it drags its slow length along. Perhaps excess of ambition was what betrayed it. Alan Schwartz told me, "It was meant to be a great statement about man's relationship to man, and how revolutions fail to work because of human frailty. Mel wanted to be serious and literary."

Two ironic footnotes should be added: (1) In 1945, an updated travesty of the same novel, transplanted to New York and entitled "It's in the Bag," was shot in Hollywood. Starring Fred Allen, it treats the source material

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as an excuse for a parade of cameo appearances by well-known names, among them (the roll is worth calling) Victor Moore, Don Ameche, Jerry Colonna, William Bendix, Rudy Vallée, Jack Benny, and Robert Benchley. Though rampantly disloyal to the original, it has many more laughs than the Brooks version, mired in reverence. Benchley, who plays a hotel ratcatcher, must surely have written his own best line. Frock-coated at his son's wedding, he draws the lad aside to calm his nerves with a last-minute word of advice. "In-laws' suits never fit," he says gravely. "Remember that, boy." (2) Nothing in "The Twelve Chairs" is as funny as the account of its making which Brooks gave in the interview with *Playboy*, published in February, 1975. Having explained that shooting took place in Yugoslavia, where he spent nine months, Brooks continued:

> It's a very long flight to Yugoslavia and you land in a field of full-grown corn. They figure it cushions the landing. . . . Now, at night, you can't do anything, because all of Belgrade is lit by a ten-watt bulb, and you can't go anywhere, because Tito has the car. It was a beauty, a green '38 Dodge. And the food in Yugoslavia is either very good or very bad. One day, we arrived on location late and starving and they served us fried chains. When we got to our hotel rooms, mosquitoes as big as George Foreman were waiting for us. They were sitting in armchairs with their legs crossed.

It is tempting to quote more. Brooks's performance throughout twelve seventy-five-minute sessions he devoted to answering *Playboy's* questions was a marathon display of his gift for chat in full flower. The printed result deserves a place in any anthology of modern American humor. The Master is back on his home ground. Brooks is showing off his own invention—the interview as comic art—and doing so with a virtuosity that makes one wonder how any other form could ever put his talents to better use.

FIFTY thousand dollars was Brooks's reward for writing, directing, co-producing, and acting in "The Twelve Chairs." It consumed three years of his life, and this means that, after taxes, he was subsisting on an annual sum of approximately eight thousand dollars. Since then—except on one eccentric and abortive occasion—he has shrunk from writing a film alone, preferring to test his ideas in the crucible of collaboration. In his words, "I didn't want to go back to the tables and risk another gambling session with my career." By resorting to teamwork, he has turned out the hits that have established his reputation; in pragmatic terms, he cannot be faulted. Even so, there are those—Alan Schwartz is one of them—who feel that the time may now have come for Brooks to trust his own intuitions and fly solo again. "Mel surrounds himself with other writers because to him the screenplay is the most important part of a movie," Schwartz told me. "But I'd like to see him doing his own stuff. He ought to give us pure, vintage Brooks, not Brooks riding on the backs of a lot of other people. There's a strange legal phrase that expresses what I mean. Suppose I'm working as a driver for a guy named Al. If I run someone over in the course of my duties, Al is responsible. But if I take the car to the beach and run someone over, that is called in law a 'frolic and detour,' and *I'm* responsible. I think Mel should go in for more frolics and detours."

In 1970, when "The Twelve Chairs" were pulled out from under him by critics and public alike, Brooks was forty-four years old and was still, by his own standards, a failure. ("To be the funniest has always been my aim"—statement to *Newsweek*, 1975.) Unable to resist another fling at the tables, he plunged into his last frolic and detour to date—a flirtation with culture which was so alien to his temperament that it seems, in retrospect, a gesture of self-destructive defiance. He saw and was impressed by an Off Broadway production of Goldsmith's comedy "She Stoops to Conquer." The play struck him as "Mozartean," and he promptly adapted it for the screen. His plan was to shoot it in England, with Albert Finney as Tony Lumpkin. A couple of years before, Finney had spent several weeks on a remote Pacific island with only one record, "The Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man," which he played every night. "When I met him in New York," Brooks recalls, "he was in awe of me, he couldn't believe I lived, he thought I was God." Finney listened to the divine proposition and reverently turned it down. Brooks took his screenplay on the familiar round of agents, producers, and studios without raising a flicker of interest, and got ready to face the fact that he was finished in show business.

DAVID BEGELMAN, recently fined for financial misdeeds committed while he was head of Columbia Pictures, here enters the story. Despite the cloud of scandal over Begelman's head, Brooks remains his impenitent admirer. "When he took over Columbia in 1973," Brooks says, "David Begelman turned it around and made it, by dint

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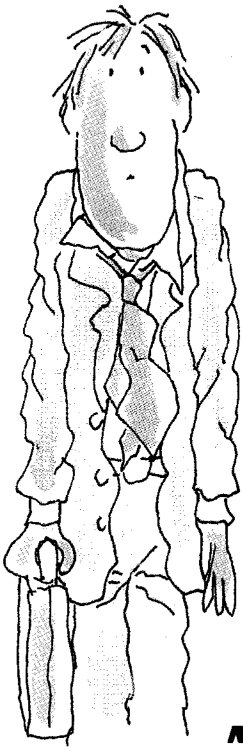
"I forgot to ask"



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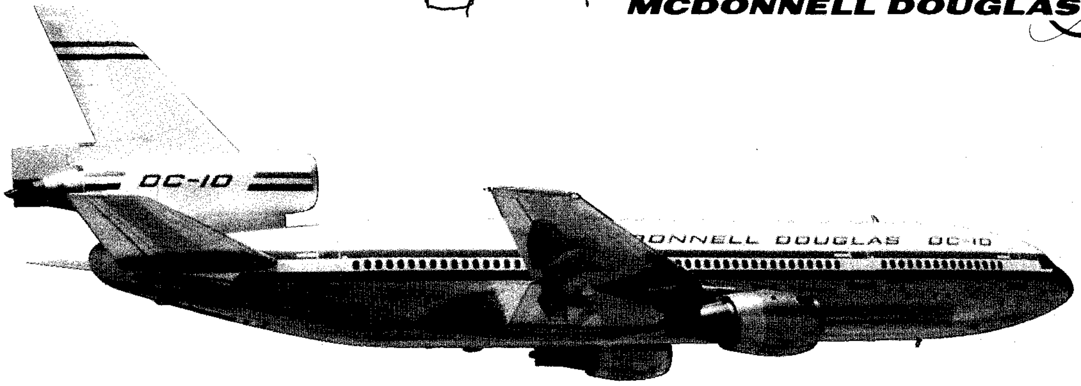

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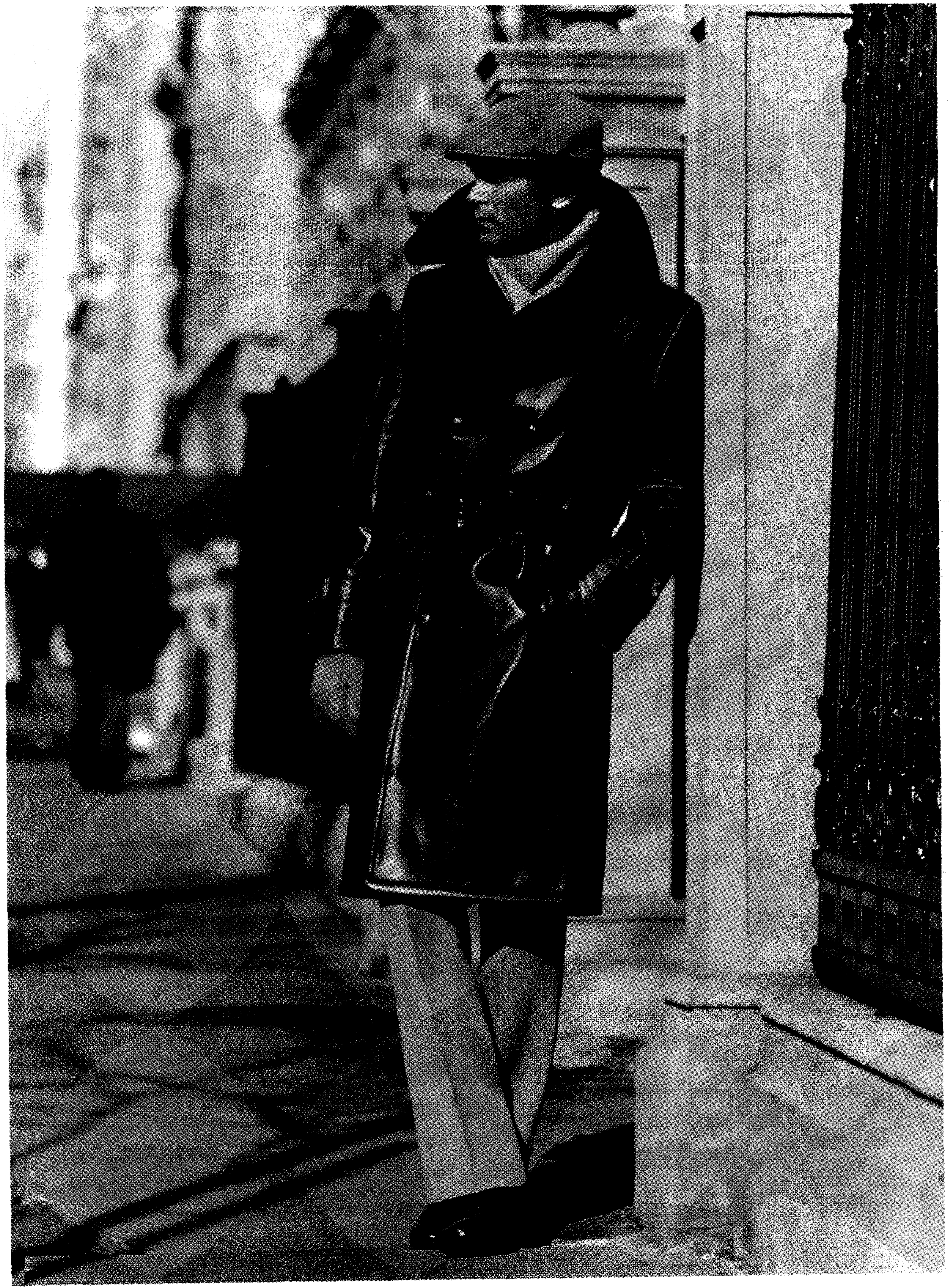

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of his aggression and his perspicacity and his acumen, a wonderful, working, winning company. I love it the way I love Fox, where I work, because it is not Gulf & Western, it's not Transamerica, it's Columbia Pictures." Before Begelman moved to Columbia, he was vice-chairman of Creative Management Associates, perhaps the most powerful talent agency in the entertainment industry. One day in 1972, Brooks was aimlessly trudging the streets of New York. Begelman spotted him and approached him. According to Brooks, the following conversation took place:

Begelman: Where are you going?

Brooks: Nowhere. I am walking in circles.

Begelman: Why is the most talented man in the world walking in circles?

Brooks: Because the most talented man in the world is out of a job and is maybe not the most talented man in the world.

Begelman: Can I buy you lunch?

Brooks: Oh, I would be so happy if you would, because I haven't eaten in days.

(*They have lunch, after which Brooks is whisked off to Begelman's sumptuous office, where "even the indirect lighting is good."*)

Begelman: The first thing you should do is sign with me. You're nobody and I'm everybody. It's a good deal.

Brooks: You're right. (*He signs.*)

Soon afterward, a friend in the script department of Warner Brothers sent him a treatment by Andrew Bergman of a Western comedy called "Tex X." Would Brooks like to rewrite it? Immobilized by self-mistrust, Brooks passed the script on to Begelman for advice. This led to another exquisitely lit confrontation.

Begelman: I think this could be very funny. Do you want to do it?

Brooks: No.

Begelman: All right, you don't want to do it. Fine. You'll do it.

Brooks: Why do I have to do it?

Begelman: Because you owe a fortune in alimony, because you are in debt, and because you have no choice. You have to do it, and with all the talent you possess.

Brooks: O.K. I'll do it. As long as I can have Andrew Bergman to work with.

Begelman: Swell. I'll make that one of the conditions.

Brooks: And not only Bergman. (*His mind races to recapture the security of the past.*) I want to do it the way we did "Your Show of Shows." We'll get a black writer, maybe Richard Pry-

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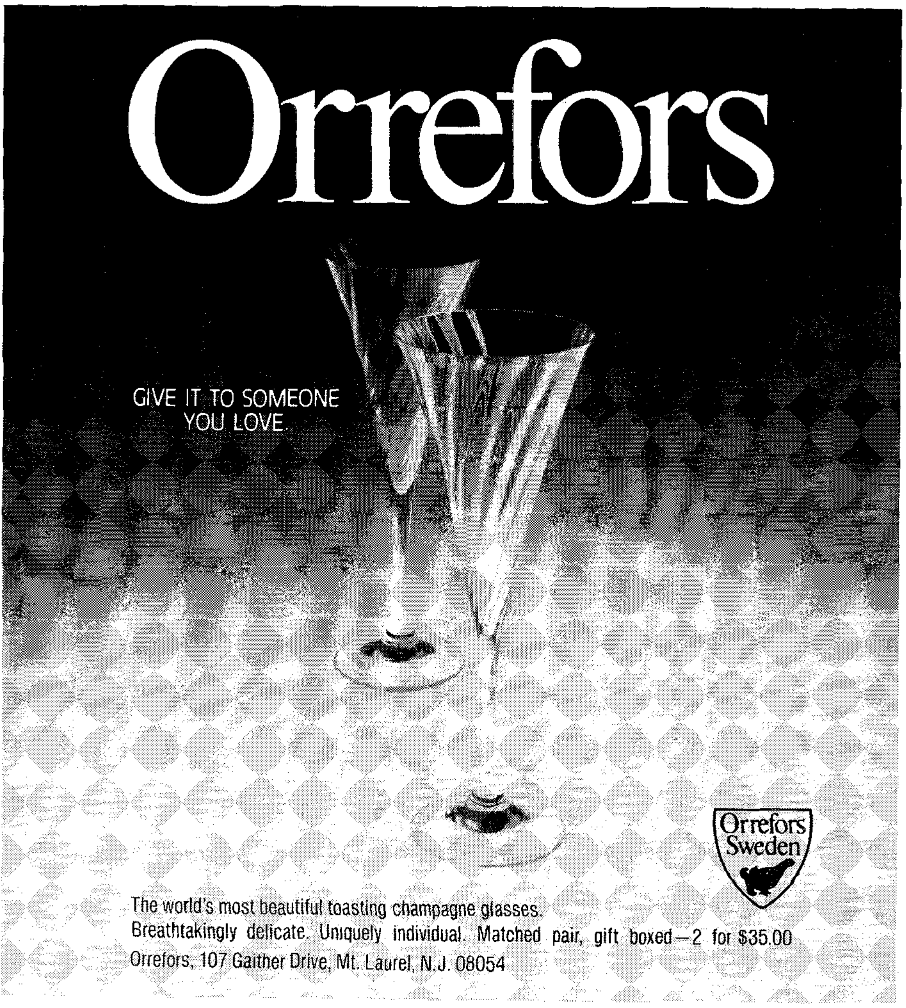

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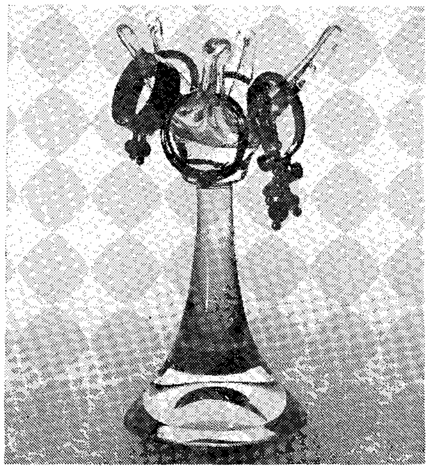

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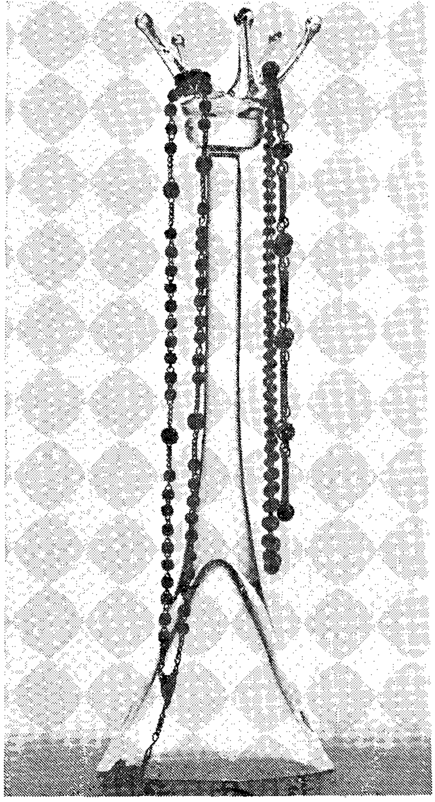

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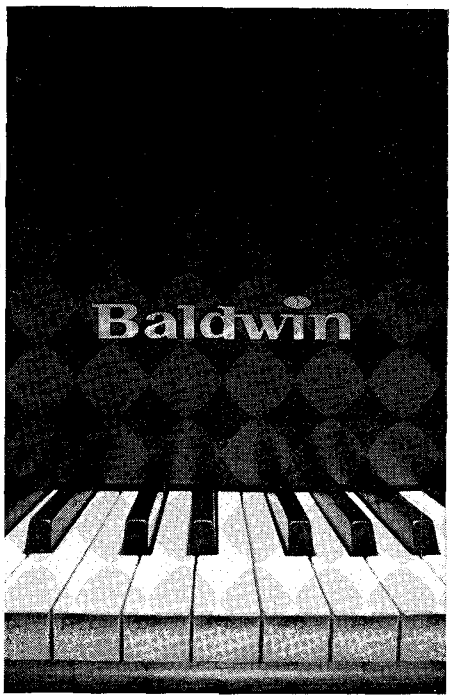
Through Begelman's mediation with Warners, this group was rapidly assembled. He negotiated a deal whereby Brooks would receive fifty thousand dollars for the screenplay (his fellow-authors would split a smaller sum four ways) and a hundred thousand more if the studio liked the result and asked Brooks to direct it. Brooks regards "Blazing Saddles"—his new title for "Tex X"—as "a landmark comedy," a historic blast of derision at the heroic myths of the Old West. "I decided that this would be a surrealist epic," he said to me. "It was time to take two eyes, the way Picasso had done it, and put them on one side of the nose, because the official movie portrait of the West was simply a lie. For nine months, we worked together like maniacs. We went all the way—especially Richard Pryor, who was very brave and very far-out and very catalytic. I figured my career was finished anyway, so I wrote berserk, heartfelt stuff about white corruption and racism and Bible-thumping bigotry. We used dirty language on the screen for the first time, and to me the whole thing was like a big psychoanalytic session. I just got everything out of me—all my furor, my frenzy, my insanity, my love of life and hatred of death."

Warners snapped up the completed script and hired Brooks to direct his first Hollywood movie. There was one stipulation: the campfire sequence, in which the bean-fed cowpokes audibly befoul the night air, must be cut. Brooks and his colleagues stood firm: either the scene stayed or they quit. Here, and elsewhere in the screenplay, they saw no reason to disown what is called "healthy vulgarity" when it occurs in Chaucer but "childish smut" when it infiltrates the cinema. Eventually, the studio gave in. However, casting was also not without problems. Brooks wanted Richard Pryor to play the black protagonist, whom knavish State Procurer Harvey Korman appoints as sheriff of a white chauvinist community in the hope of destroying its faith in law and order. Warners rejected Pryor, whom they thought too undisciplined; Cleavon Little (a suave performer with no flair for comedy) got the job instead. The late Dan Dailey was engaged for the role of the Waco Kid, the burnt-out alcoholic gunfighter whom Little enlists to support him. On the Friday before shooting began, Dailey suffered an attack of qualms and cabled that he was



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pulling out. With forty-eight hours to go, a replacement was found but when the new actor arrived on the set it was obvious that he was in no shape to act. Personal problems, it seemed, were oppressing him, and at the end of a wasted day he withdrew.

"It's a sign from God!" Brooks suddenly cried. "Get me Gene Wilder on the phone in New York!" Though Wilder knew the script and was eager to help, he was about to leave for England, where he was due to appear in "The Little Prince," directed by Stanley Donen. "Nothing's impossible!" Brooks shouted at him. "Call Donen in London now and ask him to rearrange his schedule. If he can let you out for three weeks, or even two, it's enough."

A couple of hours later, Wilder called back with the news that Donen had generously agreed to reshuffle his plans and release Wilder for three months. "I'll fly out tomorrow," Wilder said. Brooks met him at Los Angeles Airport and drove him straight to the costume department of Warners, where he was transformed within minutes into something out of "Stagecoach." Next morning, roughly thirty-six hours after the idea had first come up, Gene Wilder, word perfect, was playing the Waco Kid. "I don't believe in fate," Wilder said to me recently, "but I'm tempted to when I think of my relationship with Mel. If I hadn't been miscast in 'Mother Courage,' none of this would have happened. And if two actors hadn't dropped out of 'Blazing Saddles' at the last moment, I would never have got the part."

When shooting (ten weeks) and editing (nine months) were over, Brooks and his producer, Michael Hertzberg, held an afternoon showing of their rough cut for a dozen top executives of Warner Brothers. The occasion was about as festive—to borrow a phrase dear to Laurence Olivier—as a baby's open grave. The jury sat like so many statues on Easter Island and filed out at the end in frozen silence. Brooks was shattered, convinced that he had thrown away his last chance in movies. Hertzberg was more resilient. Grabbing a phone, he instructed his staff that he was going to run the picture again that evening, in a larger viewing theatre, and that he wanted it packed with at least two hundred people: secretaries, janitors, cleaning women, waiters—anyone but studio brass. Let Brooks continue the story: "So 8 P.M. comes and two hundred and forty people are jammed into this room. Some of them

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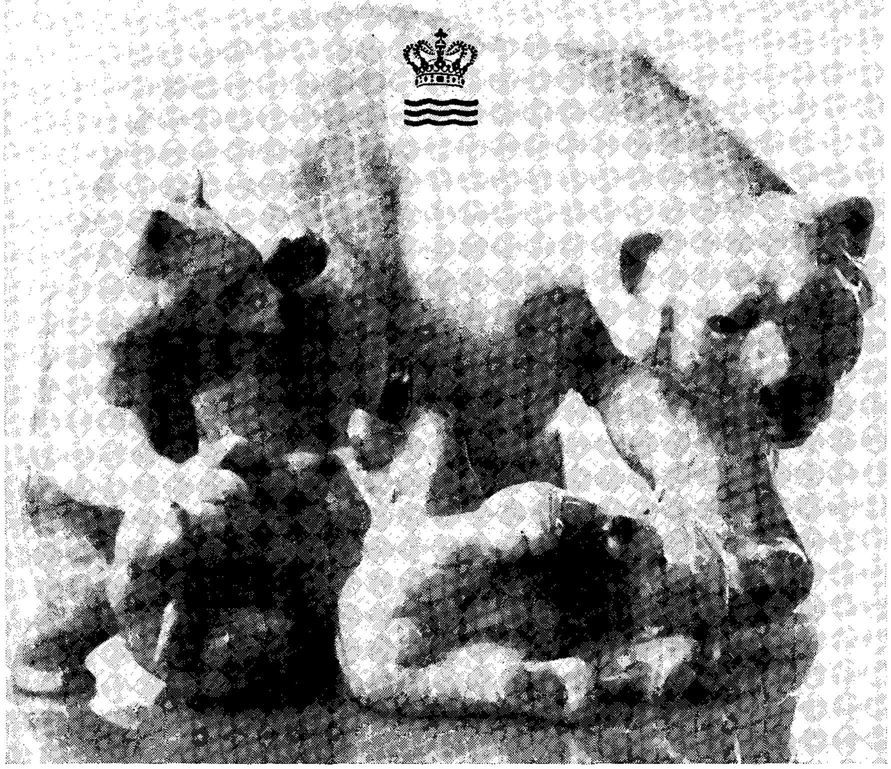

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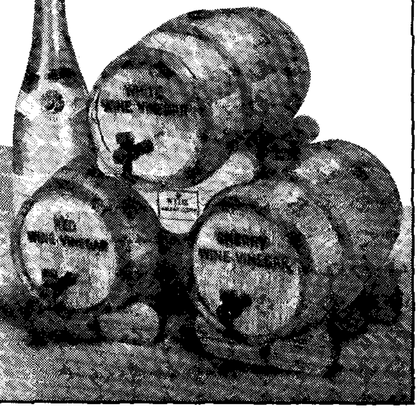

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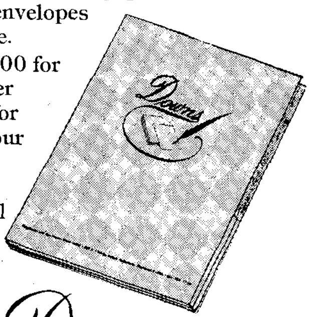

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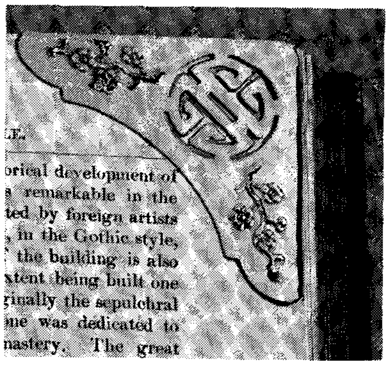
have already heard the film is a stinker, because of the afternoon disaster. So they're very quiet and polite. Frankie Laine sings the title song, with the whip cracks. Laughs begin—good laughs. We go to the railroad section. The cruel overseer says to the black workers, 'Let's have a good old nigger work song.' Everybody gets a little chilled. Then the black guys start to sing 'I get no kick from champagne. . . .' And that audience was like a Chagall painting. People left their chairs and floated upside down, and the laughter never stopped. It was big from that moment to the last frame of the last reel."

"Blazing Saddles" opened in 1974 and went on to become one of the two top-grossing comedies in the history of the cinema, outearned only by Robert Altman's "M*A*S*H." It is farce with the gloves off, living proof that a feast can be every bit as good as enough. We are not invited to smile: we either laugh or cringe. The major gags are blatant to the point of outrage, as when a thug on foot, faced with a mounted adversary, fells his opponent's horse with a roundhouse right to the jaw. Brooks's method is the comedy of deliberate overkill. The annoyance of Hedley Lamarr (the Harvey Korman character) at being addressed as Hedy is funny the first time and tedious the third, but by the fifth or sixth it is funnier than ever; in a film full of unexpected twists, the expected twist can pay surprising dividends. Though the jokes run wild, the plot is tightly organized, and parts of the script are remarkably literary; e.g., this far from untypical exchange:

Q.: Don't you see it's the last act of a desperate man?
A.: I don't care if it's the first act of "Henry V."

With "Blazing Saddles," a low comedy in which many of the custard pies are camouflaged hand grenades, Brooks made his first conquest of Middle America. He told *Playboy* that it was "designed as an esoteric little picture," but the statement simply does not ring true; he had always wanted the big audience in addition to the art-house minority, and now he had both.

"YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN" (1974) started life as a phrase doodled by Gene Wilder during an Easter vacation at Westhampton in 1973. He called Brooks and explained what he had in mind: one of Frankenstein's scions revisits the family castle in Transylvania and revives the monster his ancestor created. Brooks had no time to do more than express interest, since "Blaz-



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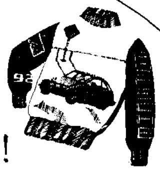

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ing Saddles" was already in preparation. A deal was set up with Columbia whereby Wilder would write a first draft and then, after "Blazing Saddles" was finished, work with Brooks on a revised version. Their collaboration was speedy and harmonious, Brooks supplying the broad comic emphases and Wilder the grace notes. Wilder restrained Brooks, who, in turn, liberated Wilder. "Mel has all kinds of faults," Wilder said to me. "Like his greed, his megalomania, his need to be the universal father and teacher, even to people far more experienced than he is. Why I'm close to him is not in spite of those faults but because of them. I need a leader, someone to tell me what to do. If he were more humble, modest, and considerate, he would probably have more friends, but I doubt whether he and I would be such good friends. He made me discover the *me* in Mel. He taught me never to be afraid of offending. It's when you worry about offending people that you get in trouble." (Compare something that Cocteau once said: "Whatever the public blames you for, cultivate it—it is yourself.")

Brooks and Wilder presented their final draft to Columbia before "Blazing Saddles" appeared. The estimated budget was two million two hundred thousand dollars. The studio wanted it reduced to a million and three-quarters. Happy to compromise, Brooks asked, "How about two million?" The answer was an unyielding no. "So we took the script to Fox, and made the picture there for two million eight," Wilder told me. "We were already shooting when 'Blazing Saddles' came out and hit the jackpot." Wilder thinks—and is not alone in thinking—that this was the biggest mistake Columbia ever made. Since "Young Frankenstein," which has so far grossed over thirty-four million dollars, Brooks has remained unshakably loyal to Fox. (In his office on the Fox lot, the wall overlooking his desk is dominated by a large portrait of Tolstoy, hanging alongside a blown-up label from a bottle of Château Latour '29. "To remind me," Brooks says, "that there are more important things than grosses.") "On the set of 'Blazing Saddles,' there was a lot of love in the air," Wilder continues. "But 'Young Frankenstein' was the most pleasurable film I've ever done. I couldn't bear to leave Transylvania."

It would be fair to call "Young Frankenstein" the Mel Brooks movie that appeals to people who don't like Mel Brooks. "I like *things* in all his films," Woody Allen said to me cau-

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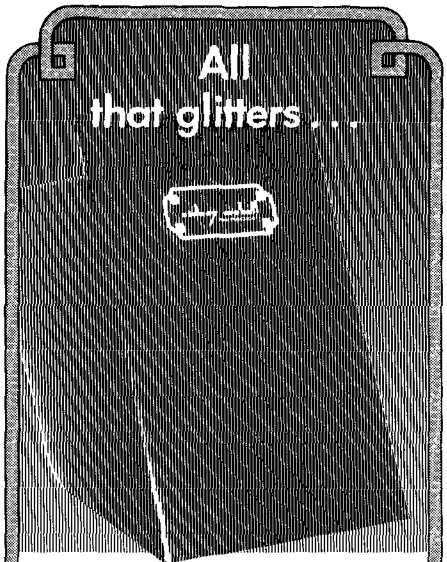

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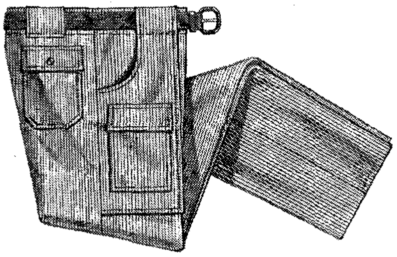

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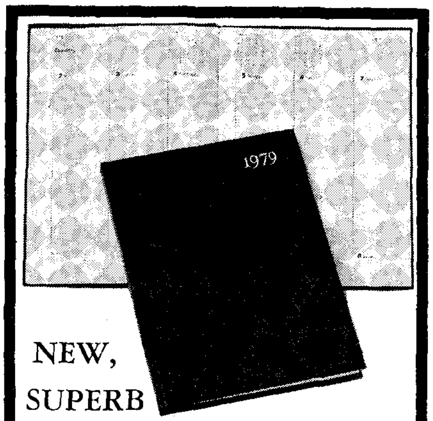
tiously, "but they're a little in-and-out for my taste. 'Young Frankenstein' is the most consistent whole." The parts mesh instead of clashing. The pace throughout, audaciously stately for comedy, is modelled on that of James Whale's "Frankenstein;" and Gerald Hirschfeld's black-and-white photography exactly matches Whale's crepuscular visual style. The members of the supporting cast play together with a self-denying temperance unique in Brooks's work: I think particularly of Frau Blücher (Cloris Leachman), the fright-wigged housekeeper, at every mention of whose name we hear the distant whinnying of terrified horses; and of the Transylvanian police chief (Kenneth Mars), with an expatriate accent even less penetrable than the late Albert Basserman's, and with a prosthetic arm that he uses as a battering ram when he leads the pitchfork-brandishing peasants against the gates of Schloss Frankenstein. In the title role, Gene Wilder—his eyes burning, his voice an exalted, slow-motion tenor—gives the finest performance yet seen in a Brooks picture. In the best sequence, fit to be set beside the "Springtime for Hitler" routine in "The Producers," Wilder proudly appears before an assembly of grave Victorian scientists to introduce his new, improved monster, who clumps onto the stage and goes into a halting impression of Boris Karloff singing "Puttin' On the Ritz." The spectators instantly subject the zombie and his master to a bombardment of cabbages and broccoli, the underlying joke being that an audience of bearded savants should have come laden with vegetable missiles in the first place. It is not the gags, however, that give the film its motive force. We have seen that Brooks is driven by a fear, amounting to hatred, of mortality; and what is "Young Frankenstein" but the story of a man who succeeds in defeating death?

BROOKS now began to savor the delights of power. "It's an achievement of a kind," he told me some time ago, "to know that I can walk into any studio—any one in town—and just say my name, and the president will fly out from behind his desk and open his door. It's terrific, it's a great feeling. My worst critic is my wife. She keeps me straight. She says, 'Are you pleasing that mythical public of yours again, or is this really funny and heartfelt?' " Brooks refers to the by-products of success under the collective title of the Green Awning Syndrome. He explains what he means in an imaginary anecdote: "Mike Nichols has just made



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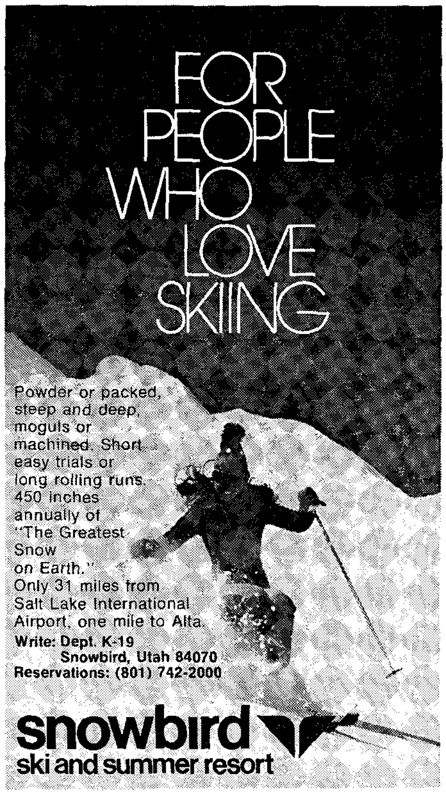

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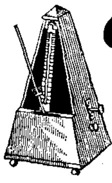

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'The Graduate,' and it's a worldwide smash, and he goes to Joe Levine and says, 'Now I want to do "The Green Awning."' 'The what?' '"The Green Awning."' 'What is that?' 'It's a movie about a green awning.' 'Does any famous star walk under the green awning?' 'No. All unknowns.' 'Are there any naked women near the green awning?' 'No, no naked women.' 'Are people talking and eating scrambled eggs under the green awning?' 'No. It's just a green awning. Panavision. It doesn't move.' 'How long would it be?' 'Two hours. Nothing but a green awning.' Levine sticks out his hand. 'All right, what the hell, we'll do it!' That's the Green Awning Syndrome."

Brooks knew that the syndrome had descended upon him when he proposed "Silent Movie" as his next picture for Fox: given his track record, the studio simply dared not turn it down, though Brooks admits that he helped Fox to be brave by revealing that there would be cameo roles for Liza Minnelli, Anne Bancroft, Paul Newman, James Caan, and Burt Reynolds. The idea for a movie with no spoken words (apart from a resonant "No!" to be uttered by the mime Marcel Marceau) had come from Ron Clark, a laconic playwright and comedy writer. Clark suggested that he and Brooks should collaborate on the script with Rudy DeLuca and Barry Levinson, widely admired as the writers of "The Carol Burnett Show;" and so it worked out. For more than twelve months—very much on and off, to fit in with their other assignments—the four men met in a room at Fox and reduced one another to hysteria. Shooting began in January, 1976, and the film had its première during the summer.

A string of sight gags linked by captions (the verbals in many instances being funnier than the visuals), "Silent Movie" consolidated Brooks's international fame. No dubbing was required to make its more explosive set pieces as accessible in Bora Bora as they were in South Bend. It spoke softly but carried a big slapstick. Moreover, it established Brooks as a movie star: Mel Funn, the ex-alcoholic director who saves his old studio from conglomerate takeover with a silent movie called "Silent Movie," was the first leading role he had ever played. The picture was his third comedy hit in three years, and up to the beginning of 1978 it had brought in more than twenty million dollars at the box office. Yet there are times when one not only can but must argue with success. Even as I smiled (which was

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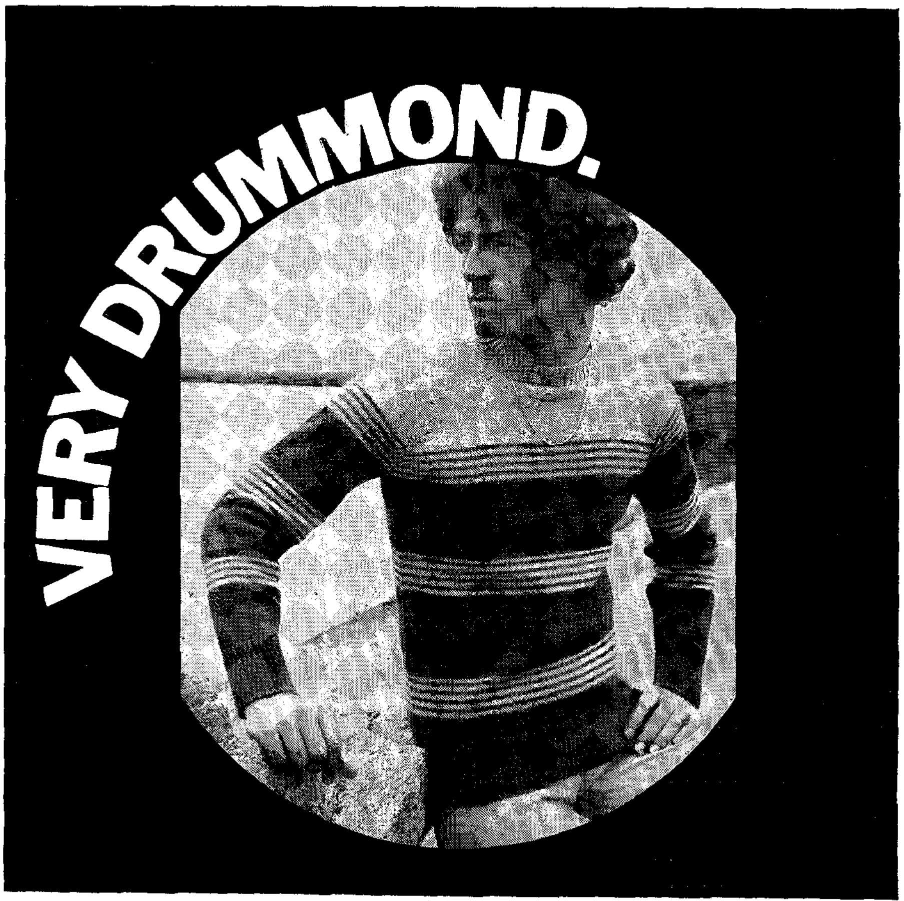
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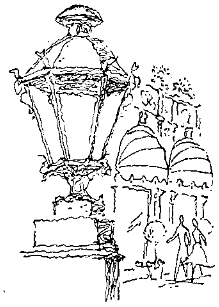

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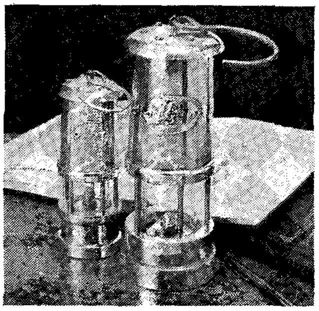

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more often than I laughed) at "Silent Movie," I knew I was watching an act of supreme perversity. Here was a master of the improvised word devoting more than a year of his life to something speechless and meticulously planned in advance. Do not suppose, by the way, that Brooks is a director who works on impulse, prancing around the set in ecstasies of Felliniesque free association. The final script of "Silent Movie" was the film the public saw, except for a brief but expensive sequence that Brooks described to me afterward: "It was called 'Lobsters in New York,' and it starts with a restaurant sign that reads 'Chez Lobster.' Inside, a huge lobster in maître d's tuxedo is greeting two very well-dressed lobsters in evening dress and leading them to a table. Already, we thought this was hysterical. Then a waiter lobster in a white jacket shows them a menu that says 'Flown in Fresh from New York.' They get up and follow the waiter lobster to an enormous tank, where a lot of little human beings in bathing suits are swimming nervously around. The diner lobsters point to a tasty-looking middle-aged man. The waiter's claw reaches into the tank. It picks up the man, who is going bananas, and that was the end of the scene. We loved it; we thought it was sensational. Every time we saw it, there was not enough Kleenex to stuff into our mouths." Nobody else, however, so much as snickered—not even at the sneak previews—with the result that Brooks decided to jettison the whole sequence. Never before had he faced such a setback, and the memory of it still ruffles him. Seeing "Silent Movie" for the second time, I found myself recalling and endorsing something that Gene Wilder had said to me: "Mel has no physical skills, like Chaplin or Fields. His skills are vocal. Not verbal but vocal." And in "Silent Movie," for all its popularity, rusting unused.

EXCERPTS from a dinner with Brooks at the Chambord Restaurant in Beverly Hills late in 1977. He is wearing a dark-blue coat, gray slacks, a light-blue shirt, and a striped blue tie; as usual, he has arrived with a leather case containing two bottles of absurdly expensive wine from his own cellar. Neither of them, alas, comes from the case of magnums of Haut-Brion '61 which Alfred Hitchcock recently sent him as a gesture of gratitude for "High Anxiety."

In reminiscent mood, Brooks speaks: "Just before 'Silent Movie' came out in 1976, I was approached by a staff writ-

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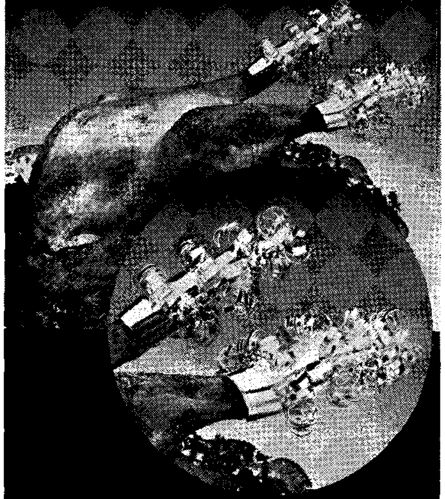

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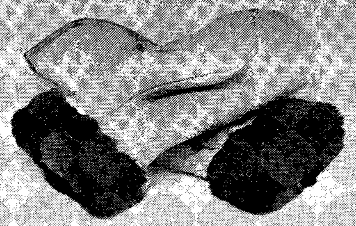

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er for *Time* who asked me whether I'd like to be on the cover. Well, I expected to be described in *Time* as 'Mel Brooks, flinty, chunky Jew,' but nevertheless I said yes. I had no idea what an insane Pandora's box of heartache would be opened by this simple exchange. Reporters followed me around night and day for weeks. They tortured my mother and my children, all the time looking for negative things about me. Everyone I ever knew was called and cross-examined. Everyone eagerly coöperated. Then, a couple of weeks before the cover was due, I was told I'd been dumped and replaced by Nadia Comaneci. So I asked, 'Isn't the election coming up soon?' 'Don't worry,' they said. 'It's you next week for sure.' Next week, Ford gets the cover. I called them up and said, 'I'm disgusted with myself. I feel used and humiliated, and I may hang myself in my cell.' They said, 'Look, if you'll just help us fill in one or two gaps, there's a good chance that next week, perhaps . . .' Even then I hesitated, but I finally said no."

I ask what seems the obvious question.

After a pause, Brooks slowly replies, "If I could get a legal guarantee that they wouldn't bother my immediate family, and if that guarantee was signed by every member of the Supreme Court, then the answer is yes, I *would* do it all again for a *Time* cover."

"HIGH ANXIETY," which featured the same star, director, and writing team as "Silent Movie," made its début in the closing weeks of 1977. Sniffed at by some of the critics (though not by the public, which has swept it into the black with a box-office take that so far amounts to about twenty million dollars), it borrows elements from a number of Hitchcock films—in particular, "Spellbound," "Vertigo," "Psycho," "The Birds," and "North by Northwest"—and, having given them all a ferociously farcical twist, arranges them in a way that would make narrative sense to an audience entirely ignorant of Hitchcock. Brooks once told me that for him the Marx Brothers were "the healthiest of all the comics," and it is not fortuitous that the middle initial of Dr. Robert H. Thorndyke, the character he plays in "High Anxiety," stands for Harpo. The best half-dozen moments in the picture have the anti-social outrageousness that was always the Brothers' trademark—moments when inhibitions evaporate and excesses long dreamed of are allowed free play; e.g., Thorn-

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dyke's fulsome impersonation of Frank Sinatra in a hotel night club, and his first dinner as the newly appointed head of the Psycho-Neurotic Institute for the Very, *Very* Nervous. In the latter sequence, an establishing shot shows us, by night, a mansion like Manderley in "Rebecca." The script continues:

> *The lights are on in the elegantly appointed dining room.* CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES *toward the lighted window. It* MOVES *closer and closer, until it actually hits the window and crashes through. We* HEAR *the* SOUND *of the window panes breaking. Everybody at the dining table stops eating their fruit cup, their spoons poised in mid-air.*

When "High Anxiety" failed to receive a single nomination, either from the Academy or from the Writers Guild, Brooks was in despair. "He was as low as I've ever known him," his wife said to me.

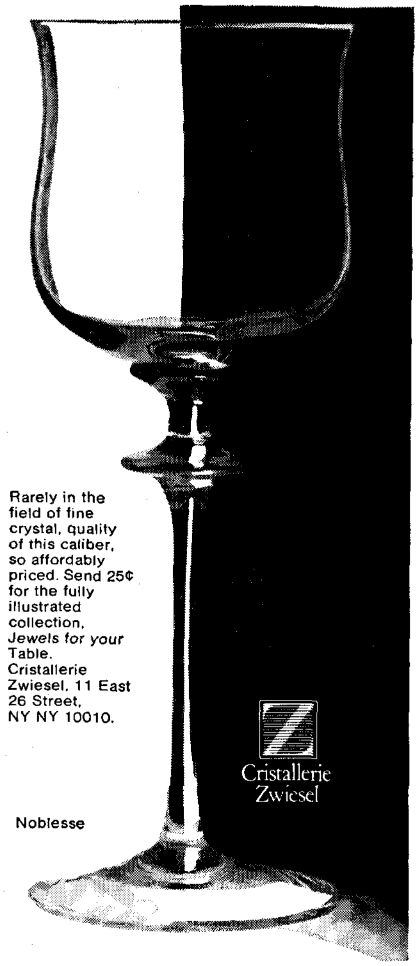
Despite its virtues, "High Anxiety" fitted into a confining pattern. Brooks had now made four films in succession, all of them based on other kinds of films—the Western, the horror picture, the silent comedy, and the Hitchcock thriller. Nor was he alone in this dependence on incest—or, if you prefer, cannibalism. As Barry Levinson remarked to me, " 'Rocky' is a remake even though it's never been made before." In the *Times* on September 25, 1977, Roger Copeland dealt with the whole subject of movies about movies:

> Consider, for example, George Lucas's "Star Wars"—a film that makes so many references to earlier films and styles of film-making that it could just as easily, and perhaps more accurately, have been called "Genre Wars."

Among other pictures cited by Copeland were Martin Scorsese's "New York, New York," Brian De Palma's "Obsession," Don Siegel's "The Shootist," Marty Feldman's "The Last Remake of Beau Geste," and Herbert Ross's "Play It Again, Sam" (written by Woody Allen), all of which drew their inspiration from celluloid sources. Nor did he overlook the career of Peter Bogdanovich, an extended act of homage to the achievements of other directors. He concluded:

> There are dangers involved: the dangers of decadence, of art feeding so completely on itself that it becomes totally cut off from life as lived.

In 1965, in an introduction to Malcolm Lowry's novel "Under the Volcano," Stephen Spender wrote, "Someone should write a thesis perhaps on the influence of the cinema on the novel—I mean the *serious* novel." I should say that there was a more urgent need for a study of the influence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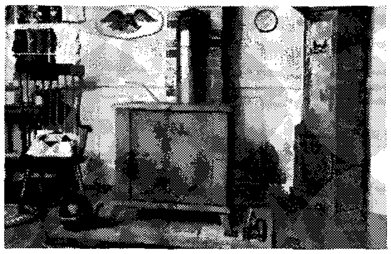
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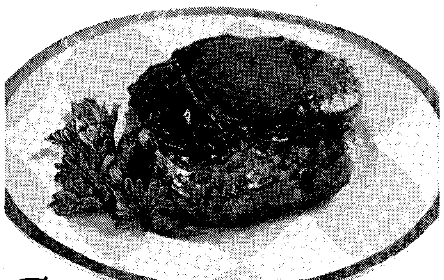
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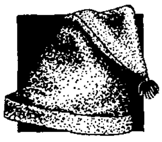
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of the cinema on the cinema—and I do not mean only the serious cinema. It is self-evident that all the arts live off and grow out of their own past. What is new about film is that it is the first narrative art to be instantly accessible, twenty-four hours a day, in virtually every living room. To immerse oneself in drama, opera, or literature, it is necessary, from time to time, to carry out certain errands, like going to a theatre, an opera house, a record shop, a bookstore, or a library; but to become saturated in cinema you do not even have to go to the movies. They come to you. The lover of stage acting will never know exactly how Sarah Siddons or Edmund Kean performed, or what the theatre in Periclean Athens was really like, but for the movie buff such problems do not arise, since the art of his choice is on permanent record, its whole history an open book, visible at the turn of a switch. This explains why so many contemporary novels and plays as well as films are swollen with references to, quotations from, and parodies of old movies. A process of artistic imperialism is going on. Never before, I believe, has one art form exercised such hegemony over the others; and the decisive factor is not intrinsic superiority but sheer availability.

The first generation of children nourished, via television, on films has only recently reached maturity, yet it's already clear how deeply—in their private behavior, not to mention their work as artists—they are imprinted by the movies. As the amount of exposed and edited film inexorably piles up, its ascendancy will increase, and we may have to cope with a culture entirely molded by cinematic habits and values. Edmund Wilson, I suspect, was hovering over this point as long ago as 1949, when, having seen a pastiche Hollywood musical called "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," he indignantly wrote to a friend, "All these attempts to exploit the immediate past show the rapidity of the bankruptcy of the movies as purveyors of popular entertainment."

Brooks, discussing his future plans, sometimes sounds worryingly unaware of the perils involved in continued addiction to the Self-Regarding Cinema. In the past twelve months, I have heard him frothing with enthusiasm about such projects as (1) "a World War Two picture to end all World War Two pictures;" (2) a remake of the Lubitsch masterpiece "To Be or Not to Be," in which he would co-star with Anne Bancroft; and (3) "a Busby Berkeley-style musical where crazy people sing for no reason," which

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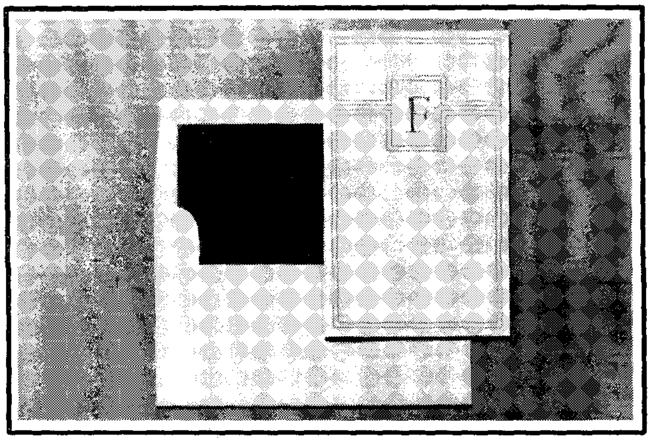

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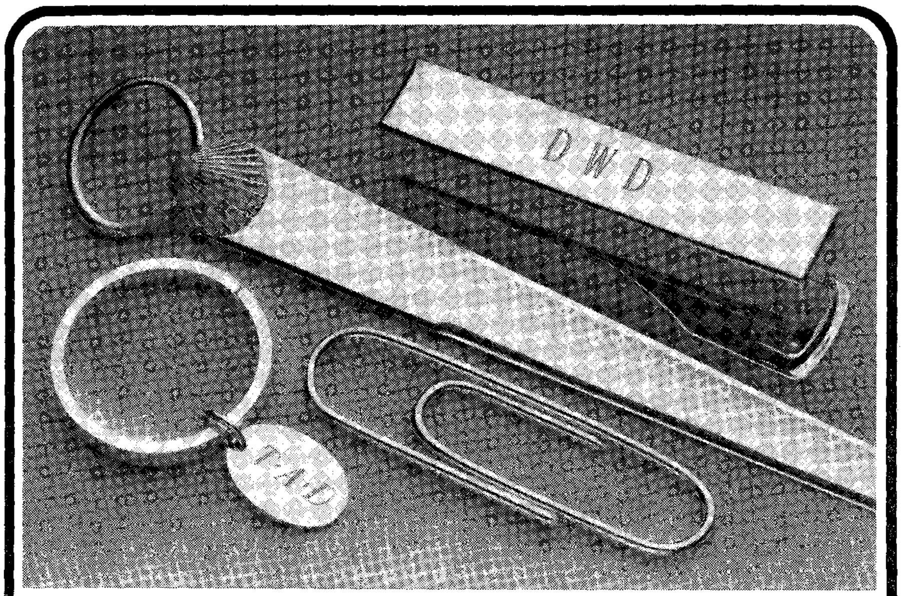

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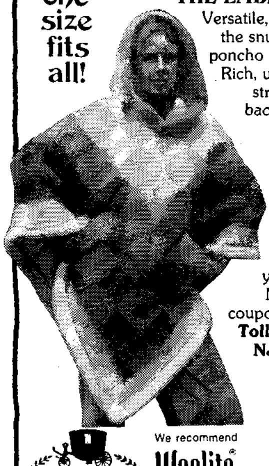

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would be tantamount to self-plagiarism, since the perfect comment on Berkeley already exists in the "Springtime for Hitler" sequence from "The Producers." Not long ago, he called up Gene Wilder and said, "When we work together again, we're going to have to bring up the big guns, and there are only two—love and death." Which is all very well except for the fact that "Love and Death" is the title of a film by Woody Allen.

Intermittently, however, Brooks will say something that bolsters one's faith in the curious inner compass that guides him. This, for instance: "I've tied myself to no end but the joy of observation. And I need to pass that on. I'm a celebrator. That's why I like the Russians. They'll look at a tree and cry out, 'Look at that tree!' They're full of original astonishments." And, still more reassuringly, this—a remark uttered in a context that had nothing to do with Brooks's own career: "We are all basically antennae. If we let ourselves be bombarded by cultural events based on movies, we won't get a taste of what's happening in the world."

SPRINGTIME, 1978: A sunny lunch in Los Angeles with Anne Bancroft, who is, according to her husband, "a strange combination of the serf and the intellectual." They live in a one-story house (no pool) in Malibu. She tells me that Brooks's newest obsession is to make a film called, *tout court*, "The History of the World, Part I." She likes the idea, because it means that, as she puts it, "he can play any period in which he feels happy." This, of course, was precisely what he did in the footloose days when he was recording "The Two-Thousand-Year-Old Man." The story of mankind would be an ideal frolic, a definitive detour; and Miss Bancroft agrees with me that he ought to write it on his own. "One evening, I came back late from a difficult rehearsal," she says. "Mel had been working at home all day. I was feeling very sorry for myself, and I wailed, 'Acting is so hard.' Mel picked up a blank sheet of paper and held it in front of me. '*That's* what's hard,' he said. I've never complained about acting again."

—KENNETH TYNAN

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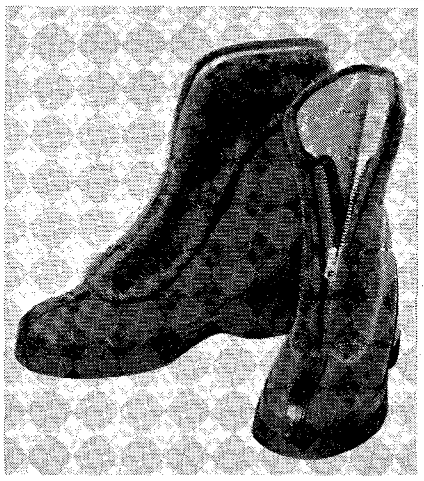
Vermont: Friday partly sunny and cool. Highs in the 60s. Friday night mostly sunny and quite cool.—*Rutland* (*Vt.*) *Daily Herald.*

Good week to get the hay in.



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THE THEATRE

BALEFUL BIGNESS

IN the nineteen-twenties, at a fashionable tea party in Madrid, Ortega y Gasset met a woman friend who was wearing the latest development in *haute couture*, a pleated skirt. The philosopher shook his head in wonder over the invention and exclaimed, "The things that could be more and are content to be less!" I was prompted to recall that pleasant example of the philosophical mind at work as I sat with increasing dismay through "King of Hearts" (at the Minskoff), precisely because this new musical *hasn't* been content to be less; on the contrary, it has so ardently embraced the tiresome American fallacy that bigger is better as to seem to be suffering from some incurable form of theatrical gigantism. "King of Hearts" is based on a charming little French movie of just over a decade ago, which bears the same name and was directed by Philippe de Broca. The movie tells a rueful, preposterous tale about a French village in the zone of combat during the last weeks of the First World War; when the villagers run away to save their lives, the inmates of the local insane asylum wander out into the world, with results hilarious to observe but sober in implication (the mad are wise, the wise are mad, etc.: welcome news to young audiences in the nineteen-sixties). Modesty of scale is indispensable to works of this sort, and from start to finish there is nothing modest about the Minskoff "King of Hearts"—even its calculated village quaintnesses are ten times life-size. A fey, tenderhearted mute outprances Harpo Marx; the hero, a gawky soldier boy from Kentucky, is so homespun that he threatens to revert to flax. The book, by Joseph Stein, and the songs (music by Peter Link, lyrics by Jacob Brackman) are saturatedly sentimental; one isn't surprised when, late in the second act, American and German soldiers (the Germans being about to blow up the town and all its innocent inhabitants) emerge from adjacent trenches and intone a tearful "Going Home Tomorrow."

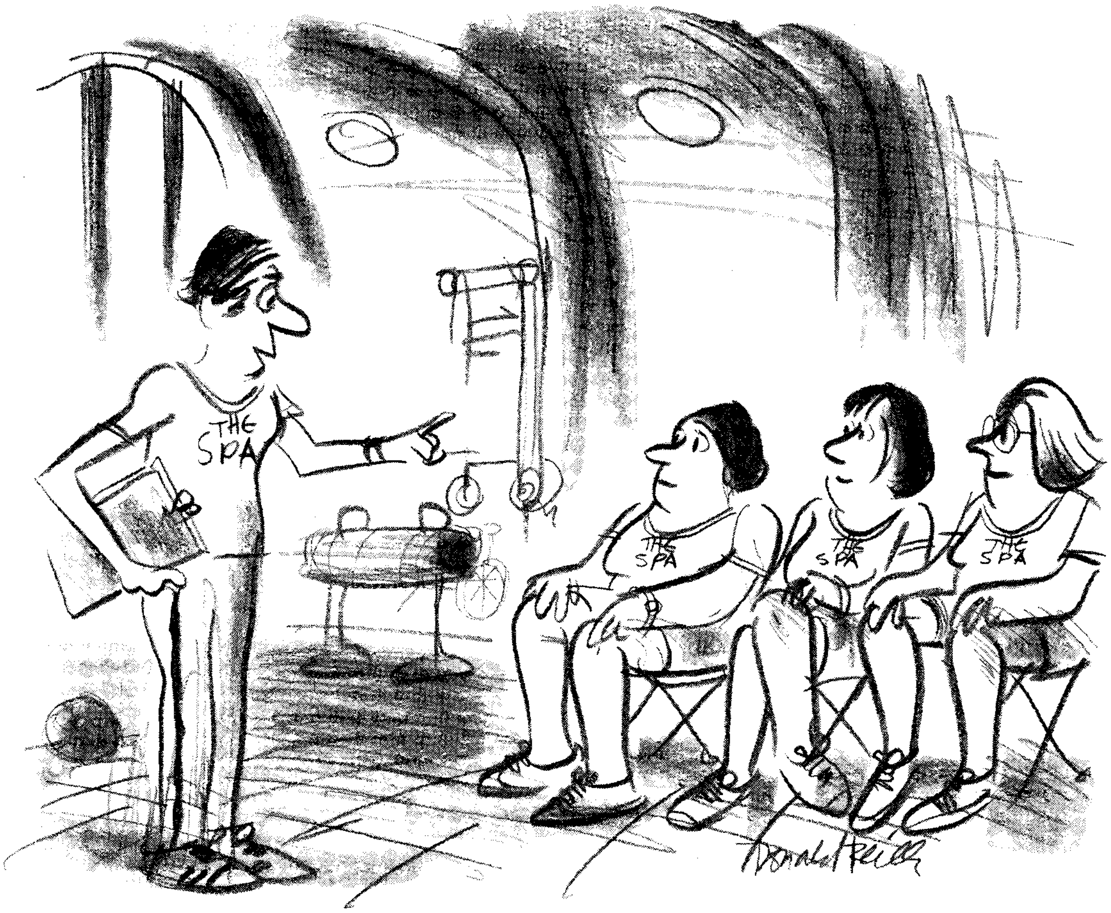
Nobody in the cast is capable of rising above the intrinsic implausibility of his role; enough to say that I felt sorry for, among others, Donald Scardino, Pamela Blair, Gary Morgan, Millicent Martin, Bob Gunton, and Michael McCarty, as well as for Ron Field, who directed and choreographed the entire production. The pretty costumes are by Patricia Zipprodt, and the adroit lighting is by Pat Collins. Santo Loquasto's settings are among the cleverest he has ever designed, but one's first admiration for them (especially for the canted roof of the local church, hung dizzily in space) diminishes as one perceives that Mr. Loquasto is performing a desperate feat of sleight of hand: he is using his superb talent to disguise the fact that "King of Hearts" is not only as big as a blimp but as hollow.

—BRENDAN GILL

OFF BROADWAY

Gold Fever

TWO prospectors, returning empty-handed from the Klondike after the gold rush, sit at a table in a cabin, with a stove behind them and a huge crate that may contain two tons of ore at the left of the table, waiting for the steamboat that will take them back to the States. Jay Broad's "White Pelicans," at the De Lys, is an attempt to dramatize the story of the Klondike gold rush entirely in the conversation of these two men. That the attempt is to some degree successful is more a matter of the performances than of the script, since the miners are played by José Ferrer and Morgan Freeman, two of the most powerful actors we have. The men are strangers to each other, haunted by what they have been through, and the talk, much of the



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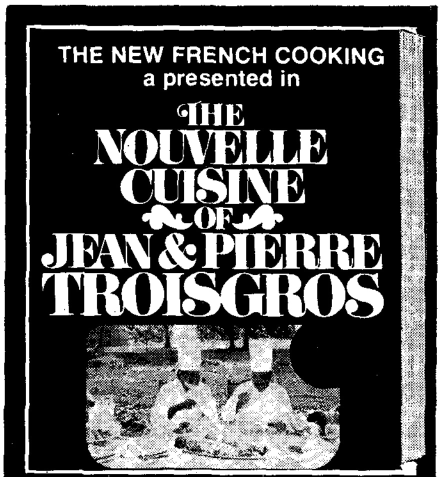
GOKEYS

time, is two broken monologues; although they appear to speak to each other, each has been alone for so long that he is really talking to himself as he relives his terrible experiences. The man called Winston (Mr. Freeman), dressed in a long, tattered fur coat and carrying a backpack crammed with an axe and a pick and pots and pans, is unable to rid his nostrils of the stench of dead mules, drowned in mud—the mules that carried his supplies when he went in, in the summer. The man called Harry (Mr. Ferrer), dressed in a business suit and a chesterfield, wearing a derby and carrying cowhide suitcases, recalls his climb up a pass through walls of ice when he went in, in winter. Between them, in the lines they repeat and the anecdotes they tell over and over—about a man who walked into a saloon and poured a bag of gold dust on the bar, about men who died or disappeared, about a man who used his mule to free his sled runner from the ice, about mules in general—they evoke the whole drama of the gold rush: the quick triumphs and the longer despair. An air of mystery is always present in this haunting show; at the end, only Mr. Freeman is on the stage.

"White Pelicans" is based on a remarkable album of photographs, "One Man's Gold Rush," that were taken in the late eighteen-nineties by E. A. Hegg. Whether "White Pelicans" makes a play is anybody's guess, but it makes a theatrical evening. The acting is, as I say, of a kind we rarely see Off Broadway. Mr. Ferrer is quiet, self-contained, almost anesthetized by exhaustion and defeat, and as empty as the Territory he has left; Mr. Freeman is restless and volatile and eager to return. Mr. Broad directed.

VINCENT CANBY'S "End of the War," in a workshop production through October 29th at that lucky Off Off Broadway lab the Ensemble Studio Theatre, is a very good play, set aboard a United States Navy landing ship homeward bound from the Pacific after the Second World War. The four officers and the sailors aboard seem indolent and lethargic now that they are on the way home, but their funny, sexy chatter, which breaks stretches of silence, masks considerable inner turbulence and sexual anxiety. There is no longer any need for "morale," and it dawns on the audience slowly just how demoralized and worried many of the men are. The leading role is that of the engineering officer, in private life a mathematician



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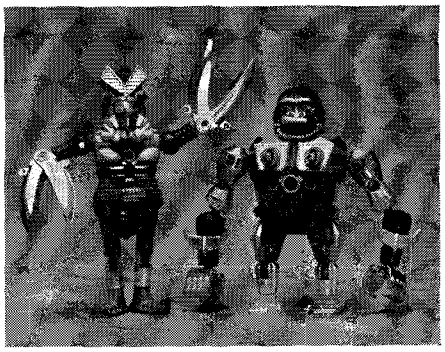

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with an I.Q. of 182—a rigid, uneasy man, who spends most of his time playing gin rummy with another officer, a former football star. The engineer certainly seems tense and eccentric, but his tension is mostly concealed until two of his colleagues jokingly threaten to throw him into the water. He gets hurt in a fight with his gin-rummy partner (bearing homosexual implications), and later commits suicide—an abrupt ending to the play which seems unwarranted, but who can tell? Perhaps as the performance deepens and grows in subtlety the ending will work. Under David Margulies' strong, sensitive direction, all becomes clear at exactly the right time, and the actors do justice to Mr. Canby's witty, stylish dialogue. Most of the acting is still in transition, and therefore unreviewable, but I don't see how Dominic Chianese could be better as the easygoing but worried captain of the ship, trying to hold everything and everybody together until it reaches port, or John Seitz as an insubordinate, kind sailor, the only Regular Navy man aboard.

THE Harold Clurman, a new, trim little Off Off playhouse on West Forty-second Street, opened last week with a boring, depressing production of "The Lesson," Eugene Ionesco's one-acter about an elderly professor—all fake humility to start with, and all lethal rage at the end—who tutors a girl with a toothache for a doctorate in everything and finally kills her, as he has killed thirty-nine students who preceded her. The subjects covered are arithmetic and linguistics, and there are many amusing lines of a Mid-European-whimsical kind (Ionesco is, of course, a Rumanian who writes in French; he is here well translated by Donald M. Allen) and many opportunities for a kind of glittering, crazy comedy—all of which go by the board in the present circumstances. Under Jack Garfein's direction, and with some supervision by the dramatist, who attended a preview or two, Joseph Wiseman, miscast, plays the lunatic professor with leaden portentousness, but Didi Conn, making her Off Broadway (or Off Off) début, does well as the aching pupil. When I first saw "The Lesson," in 1963, with Ronald Weyand as the professor, I found it entertaining—a spoof of pedantry, with some jokes on the side about the impossibility of communication—and I was taken aback by his putting on a Nazi armband at the end; it hadn't occurred to me that the play was meant to be

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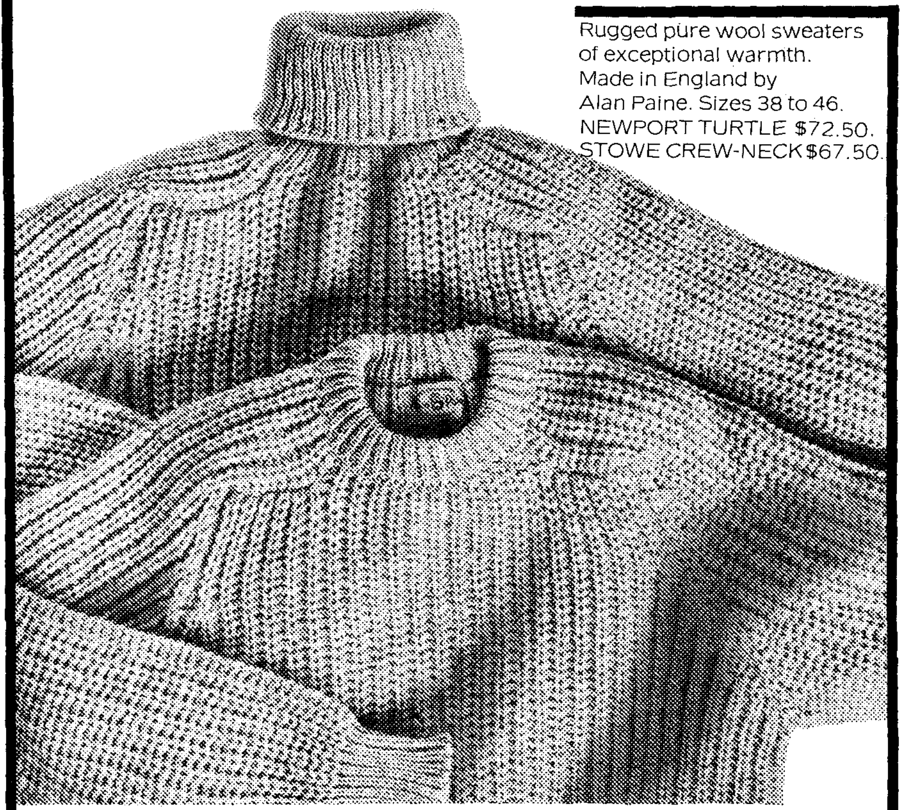

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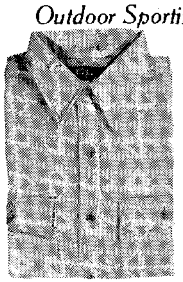

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anything even as serious as satire. What once seemed a bit of ironic nonsense (seemed to me, that is; when Wolcott Gibbs saw it, in 1958, he wrote, "It is perfectly awful") has turned quite hateful.

The play was preceded by a movie, "The California Reich," which is a chilling documentary about the Nazi Party in California (and the movie was preceded by noisy pickets on the street, who urged everyone in singsong to boycott what they idiotically considered a Nazi recruiting film). Then there was an intermission—very long-faced audience in the lobby—and then that dismal production. What a dispiriting evening to celebrate Harold Clurman, the most high-spirited man in the American theatre! —Edith Oliver

•

GATHERING GREENS

In thin snow,
blown inland
from sea, all

afternoon I've
tracked into
the woods after

cedar, hemlock,
and spruce. I've
come across

mouse print,
fox sign, and
deer run to where

the old dark
spends the night.
I've been here

before, but not
so far in—not
beside partridge

in blowdown, not
to the deeryard
in snow. I need

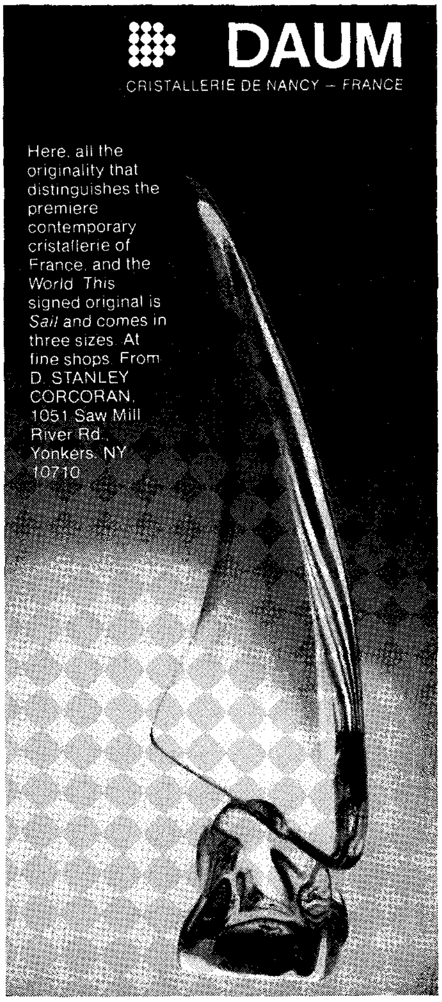
to learn to
protect myself,
as any animal

must. I try
to learn with
myself to be

gentle, to wait
until light
for the first

shadow to
point me out
to the coast.

—Philip Booth



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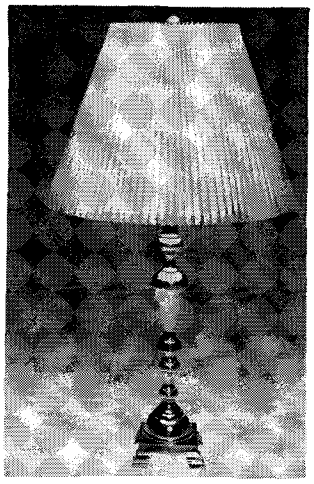

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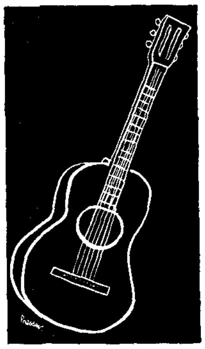
JAZZ

Magisterial

Sylvia Syms' three-week engagement at Michael's Pub is a heartening occasion, for American singers of her sort are hard put to it to find decent, sustaining work. Their audiences are ready and waiting, but few of the essential middlemen—modern counterparts of the gifted altruists who ran the best New York night clubs thirty years ago—have come forward. The dozen or so clubs around the country which are hospitable to these singers rarely offer them more than a two- or three-week job a year, and the big record companies ignore them, as does television. (The small record companies that are willing to put out tapes that the singers themselves make, generally at their own expense, are hampered by poor distribution systems and low advertising budgets.) These singers are the conservators and perfecters of a tradition of singing begun in this country in the twenties, but they are in an even more rarefied position than the musical avant-garde, which in the past year or so has been taken up gingerly by the establishment. (Joe Papp is enough of a devotee of American singing to practice it professionally, but the weekend jazz concerts that have been offered since March at the Public Theatre have been given almost exclusively by the avant-garde. If Papp set aside more space for singers, he could, after all, occasionally fill it himself.) So most of these American singers support themselves in the studios, on the stage, as teachers, or in day jobs, and Sylvia Syms, who, perforce, has passed through a thousand "South Pacific"s and become the best of all the Bloody Marys, is no exception. But she feels that prospects for singers are better than they have been since the forties, and she talked about this and other matters at a lighting rehearsal at Michael's Pub the morning before her opening. She sat at a table down front, and she was wearing a brown djellabah. She talks in a powerful, swarming way, and crowds her subjects together. All the while, she kept her eye on a tall blonde named Barbara who was rigging the lights. "I worked at the Bottom Line a while ago," she said, "and it was a great success. You should have seen the kids in my dressing room! I guess I've come to their attention through a record I made for A & M Records, in which I sing mostly contemporary songs accompanied by the likes of the Brecker brothers and Peter Frampton. But in clubs I've been doing some Billie Holiday songs, and kids would ask about her and whether I had ever *heard* Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young in the flesh, so I'd tell them about Fifty-second Street and that special, unique atmosphere where everyone was clustered together in six or eight places, where Billie and Art Tatum and Hawkins and Nat Cole and Don Byas would all be working at the same time. Young people are involved with truth, and now they have a tremendous interest in the period I grew up in. I feel I can teach them. School-learned teaching is one way, but having *been* there is my way." Barbara asked Sylvia Syms where she would be on the bandstand. "I'll stand in the crook of the piano, and I won't move much. This place is too dark for singers, too flat. I want pinks and blues and bastard amber. A performer should be enhanced rather than look wormy. And, pussycat, make the lights hit from here to here." She measured with her hands the space between the top of her head and her bosom. "I don't want the audience hypnotized by my sixteen-hundred-dollar dress—that's also why I never wear any jewels except earrings when I perform. One more thing: bring up the lights when my sidemen take their turns. It's very important to me to see the energy in Milt Hinton's face when he solos.



"Gil Wiest, the impresario of this place, is letting me do a program of Fred Astaire songs," she said. "And do you know it's been a fantasy of mine for twenty years or more? When I was a little, fat kid in Brooklyn, I used to sit in movie theatres and imagine I was Cyd Charisse or Ginger Rogers. He gave every lady he worked with elegance—even the elegant ones—and he was a master of economy. He never wasted a step or a look or a gesture. But how do you choose thirty songs from the career of a man who started when he was six and is nearly eighty now, and for whom some of the greatest songwriters have written? I told Fred I was doing the show, and he wrote me a lovely note." She laughed

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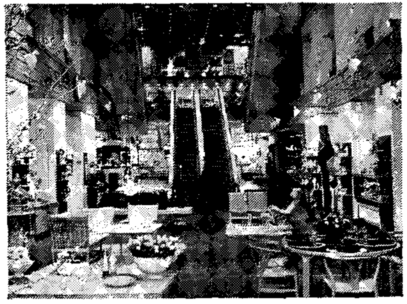

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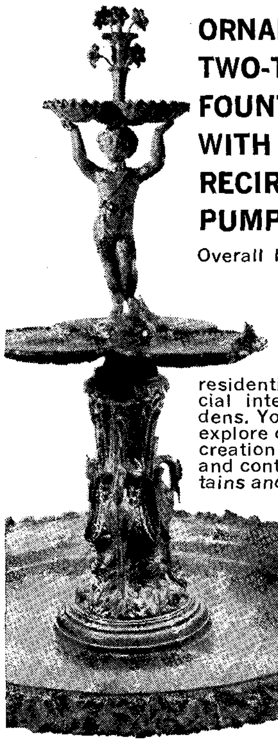

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and waved one hand. "Oh, well. If I ever get the chance to come back, I'd like to be a combination of Audrey Hepburn and Raquel Welch and Ava Gardner, with small overtones of Simone Signoret." Barbara asked Sylvia Syms if she would test the lights. She wound her way slowly between the tables and got up on the bandstand. She stood at the center and picked up a hand microphone and clasped it in front of her. The lights made her face and shoulders glowing and soft. "How's that?" Sylvia Syms asked. "I need all the help I can get from God and man."

SYLVIA SYMS' singing has grown magisterial over the past half-dozen years. Her voice is deeper and broader, and has taken on the heavy, almost Victorian tones of Bessie Smith and Paul Robeson. It moves with remarkable agility, but it seems to move in slow motion. It strolls through its arpeggios and vibratos and glides. Yet the beautiful diction clicks and sparkles, lighting the tones around it. She has said that she listened to everyone who was good when she was growing up, in the late thirties and early forties, and in particular to Lee Wiley and Lester Young. She often ends phrases with long Wiley notes capped by sumptuous, lingering vibratos, and the way she edits the melody and rides the tail of the beat suggests Young. She makes taking chances appear conventional, though her style occasionally tips and goes out of whack, making her phrasing oracular and oppressive. On opening night at Michael's Pub, she was airborne and precise. She sang each song with care and grace, using endless dynamics and taking pains to make each syllable visible. Her tempos were right and so was the length of each song, and she limited her few remarks to the music itself. (This was a relief, for Syms' Brooklyn loquacity often leads her to crack jokes between numbers. This breaks the spell she has just cast and dilutes the opening of the next song.) She overcame a sound system that made her seem pinched and strident during the first six numbers and made her pianist, Michael Renzi, blare. But after a time it became clear that, despite her drive and buoyancy, Sylvia Syms was moving parallel to most of the numbers. Astaire's songs were generally picked to fit his pale, lightsome voice. They were rhythm songs that fitted easily and inconspicuously between his dances. Even his ballads had a bouncy, parenthetical quality. People loved his singing because it swung and

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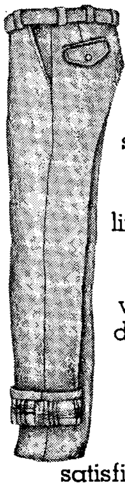

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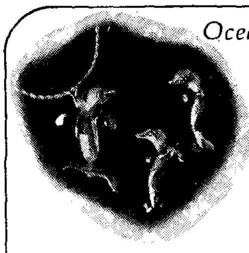

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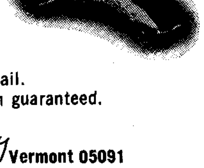

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was carefree. But Sylvia Syms' attack and voice need songs with meat on their bones. She is peerless when she does her floating, aching "As Long as I Live," and she was peerless when at Michael's Pub she settled into slow and spacious versions of "A Foggy Day" and "By Myself" and "How Long Has This Been Going On?" Her voice spread to its limits, and her emotional content found its proper level. But her fleet, almost flip rundowns of "The Piccolino," "All of You," "Flying Down to Rio," "Pick Yourself Up," and "Something's Gotta Give" evaporated as they hit the air.

Michael Renzi is a strong accompanist, and it is never clear whether his long, contrapuntal single-note melodic lines will turn aside before they get in Sylvia Syms' way. The guitarist Wayne Wright uses a lot of blue notes and legato phrases, which balance the famous Astaire sunniness. Milt Hinton and Ron Davis round out the group. Sylvia Syms' lighting rehearsal was in vain. The light was flat and ordinary, and gave equal value to everyone on the stand—probably because the houselights ringing the back of the bandstand had not been doused. But Sylvia Syms' dress—black chiffon trimmed at the neck and wrists with black and white feathers—was perfect. It was a beautiful vase for her broad, shining, agile face.

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

•

There'll be some changes made at Lake Forest Academy-Ferry Hall this year.

The changes, instituted by Headmaster Eugene Day, who himself is new to the Academy, will affect students, teachers and the campus buildings themselves.

Most dramatic of the new rules affecting students is the dress code, which was explained in a personal letter from Day to parents prior to the start of school.

Forbidden in the classroom are jeans, painters pants, T-shirts, and any sort of sports uniforms or clothes more appropriate for the playing field. Girls' clothing is required to be modest and distracting.

—*Highland Park (Ill.) News.*

Plus ça change . . .

•

HOLLYWOOD—The recent airliner crash in San Diego prompted CBS to postpone telecasting a segment of its stewardess series *Flying High* that had been scheduled for Sept. 29. The segment contained humorous references to the possibility of a crash. A CBS spokesman said, "It was reviewed and everybody thought it would not be in the best taste to air it at this time." The episode has been rescheduled for Oct. 6.—*TV Guide.*

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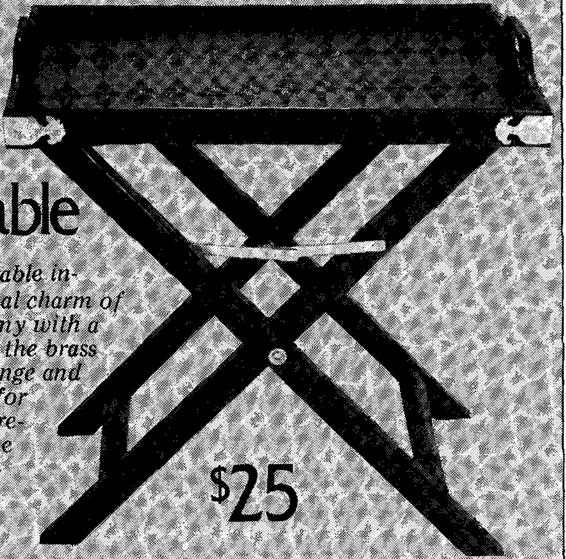

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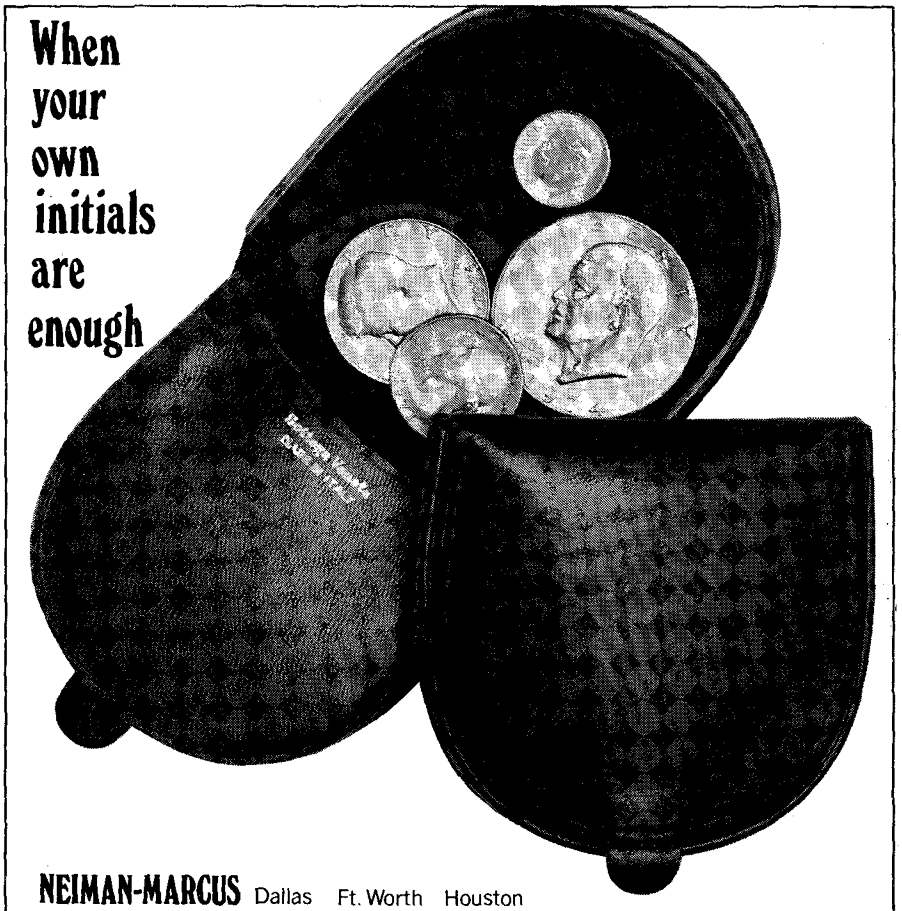

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Saint Dorothy

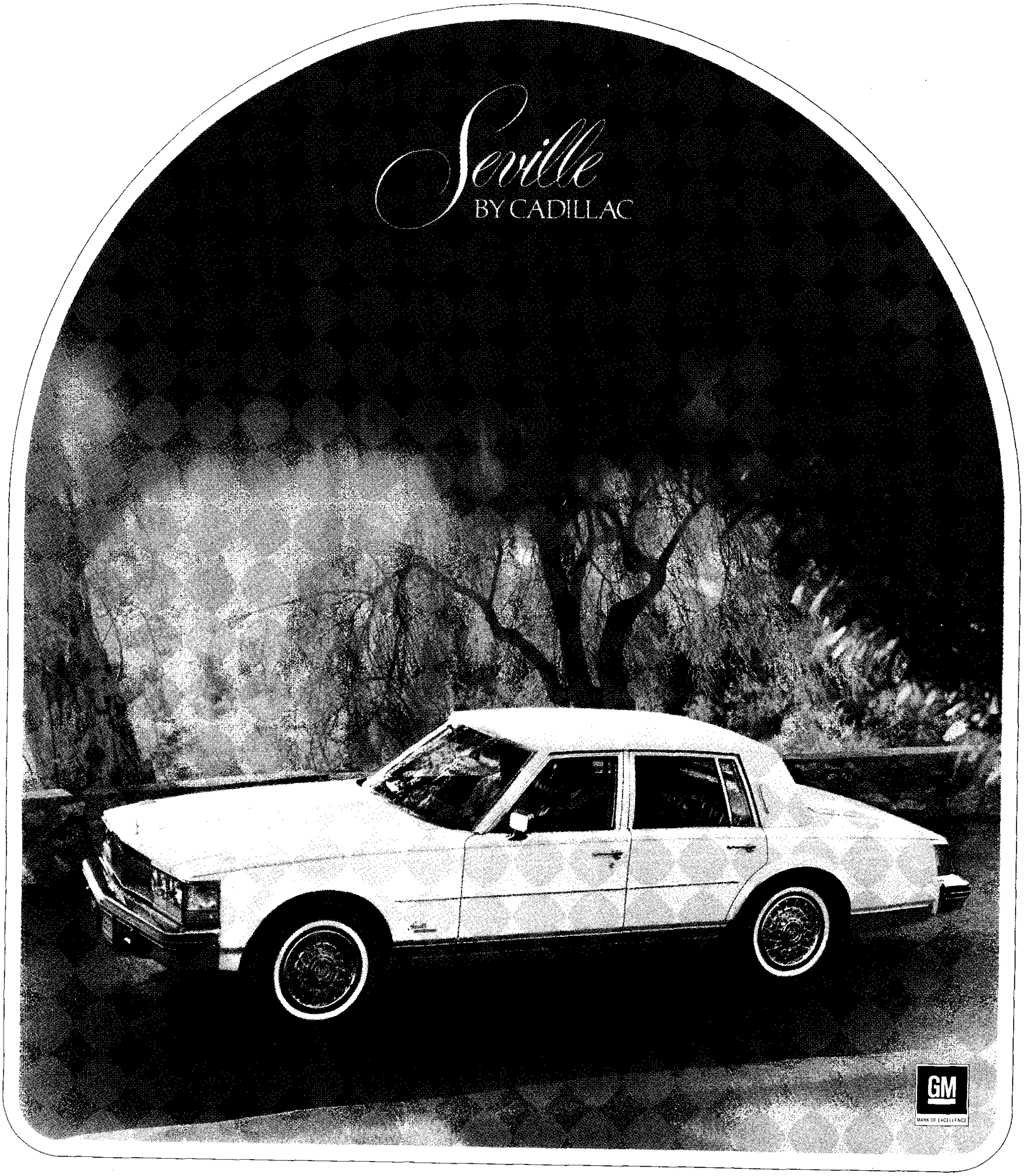
DIANA Ross's determination to play Dorothy in the film version of the black Broadway musical "The Wiz" is possibly the chief example in all movie history of a whim of iron. Doom-laden as the idea was, something might still have been saved if Joel Schumacher, who was hired to write the script for this Diana Ross "Wiz," had conceived an adult Dorothy who was ready for anything, and funny. That way, the thirty-four-year-old star might at least have sung some hot songs and shown off her icy glamour and salacious imp's smile. But, in the tradition of those actresses of the past who made their reputations as sirens and courtesans and then decided they had to play a saint or a nun, Diana Ross approaches the role like a reformed sinner. Her Dorothy, a kindergarten teacher in Harlem, is implacably virtuous and too shy to go out with men. She wears a demure high-necked pale-lavender blouse and a white skirt with a touch of orange at the waist, and a frightened look. Fervently wet-eyed, she sings songs of preachy uplift, in relentlessly slow arrangements. Each time she starts glowing for a number, it's like a nightmare version of "Sesame Street."

When a picture is packaged with elements that don't really belong together, almost everything that can go wrong generally does. The director, Sidney Lumet, who took on the job after John Badham quit (rather than accept Diana Ross in the lead), is known as a man who comes in under budget. In a business in which it's notoriously difficult to hold to a shooting schedule, he probably has had the best record of any director. But, just as in the contemporary legend it's the good, quiet boy who climbs up to the tower and starts shooting, Lumet, the director least likely to run over budget, exploded into extra time and extra money until the cost of "The Wiz," which Universal, in association with Motown, had budgeted at the frighteningly high figure of eleven million dollars, rose to somewhere close to thirty-five million dollars (exclusive of advertising). Shot entirely in the refurbished Astoria Studios and on New York locations, "The Wiz" is easily the most expensive film ever made here; it is also the most expensive film ever made with a black cast and, in fact, it is the most expensive movie musical ever made. Only a half dozen or so musicals ("The Sound of Music," "Saturday Night Fever," "Grease," "Mary Poppins," and a few others) have ever brought in as much money as "The Wiz" *cost*.

Lumet's feeling for New York is his strength in some films (as in "Dog Day Afternoon"), but his decision that Manhattan would be the fantasy land of Oz turns the movie into a garbled "I Love New York" commercial. The script hasn't been thought through in terms of the adult heroine or of the city, and the film has no imaginative logic, no consistency. Dorothy and her Aunt Em (Theresa Merritt) live in a house with a handsome exterior (inside, somebody has gone berserk with fudge-colored paint), but from what they say they don't seem to know whether it's in Harlem or Brooklyn, or whether the party they're having is for Thanksgiving or Christmas or for somebody who has a new baby. This opening sequence appears to be an elaborate preparation for Aunt Em's nudging of Dorothy, telling her that it's time for her to get out in the world and find a fella. It seems that Dorothy, because of her "shyness," has never ventured below 125th Street. Schumacher, who must be one of the most maladroit screenwriters of all time, has dear old Em tell Dorothy she should stop teaching kindergarten and teach high school instead. Is old Em suggesting to Dorothy that in a high school she could pick up a boyfriend, or just that high school would be closer to "life"? After this bizarre conversation, Dorothy rushes out into the snow, chasing her little dog, Toto, whereupon a tiny cyclone whisks them both off to the land of Oz. Although Oz is meant to be Manhattan, it includes locations in Queens, the Bronx, and Brooklyn, and after Dorothy accumulates her travelling companions, they have to go over a couple of bridges to get to the Emerald City (the capital of Oz), in lower Manhattan. Geographically, we're thoroughly dislocated. When Dorothy first arrives in Oz, she's in a darkbluish playground with graffiti-covered walls. The cyclone seems to have tossed her around the corner. When she's in a rubble-strewn lot and we expect her to say "Damn, it looks just like home," she dithers "Where am I?"—as if she'd never seen a burned-out block in Harlem. Since the movement of the film parallels that of "Saturday Night Fever"—away from the drabness and into the big city—it would make sense if this adult Dorothy loved what she saw of the great world. But all she does is moan about wanting to be home with Aunt Em—she seems quite pathological. Even L. Frank Baum, the author of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," got bored with returning his child Dorothy to Kansas, and in the later books in the series he moved her Aunt Em and Uncle Henry to Oz with her. Baum's Dorothy was a very grown-up, matter-of-fact little girl; the original W. W. Denslow illustrations show a child of about six. (She gets a few years older in the later books.) The Dorothy of this movie is a woman who behaves like a little girl—a case of arrested development.

The "classic" M-G-M, Judy Garland version of 1939 wasn't the first time the story had been filmed: in 1925, Dorothy Dwan played Dorothy, with Larry Semon as the Scarecrow and Oliver Hardy as the Tin Woodman, and back in 1910 there was a film version that looks highly imaginative in photographs (a little Gustave Moreau, a little Edward Hicks). The book itself is a magical vaudeville. Baum had spent his youth in the theatre: he joined a touring company when he was nineteen, and was in a New York hit when he was twenty-two. While he was still in his mid-twenties, he wrote a musical comedy and toured in it, but the sets and costumes were destroyed by fire, and, with a growing family to support, he had to go to work as a travelling salesman. It wasn't until he was past forty, and had run a store and then a newspaper (both failed), that he began to publish the fairy tales he'd been improvising as bedtime stories for his four sons. "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," which came out in 1900, was the most successful children's book of the Christmas season, and Baum immediately set about dramatizing it and writing lyrics. His musical-comedy version opened in Chicago in 1902 and played on Broadway for a year and a half, and its two stars—Fred Stone as the Scarecrow and David Montgomery as the Tin Woodman—toured with it off and on for almost a decade. In 1906, Baum himself, a popular lecturer by then, went on the road with a "fairylogue" of Oz—hand-colored movies and slides.

When I read the Oz books as a child, I loved their plainness. The fairy tales that we inherited from Europe were usually translated and adapted in fancied-up styles that didn't resemble



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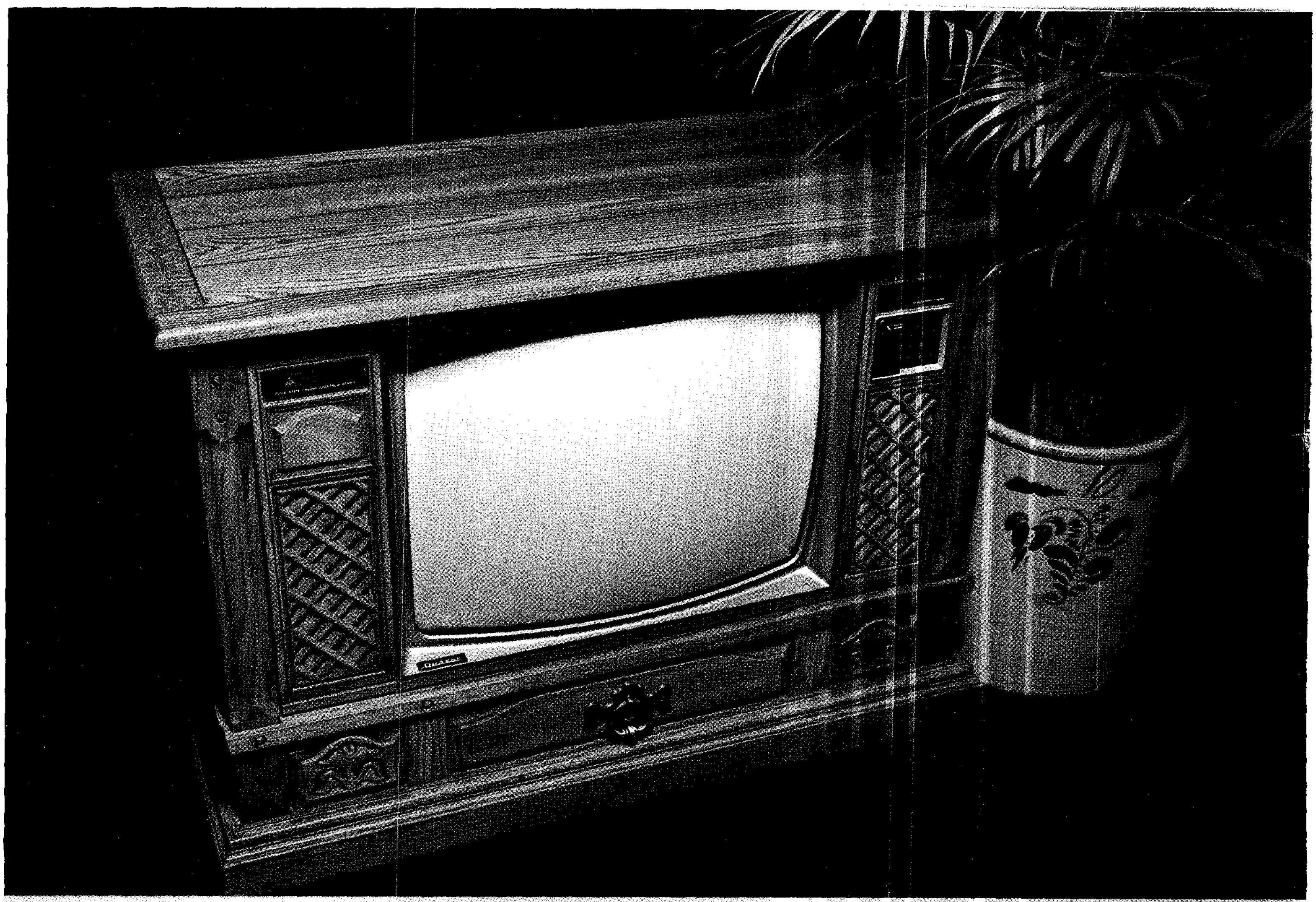

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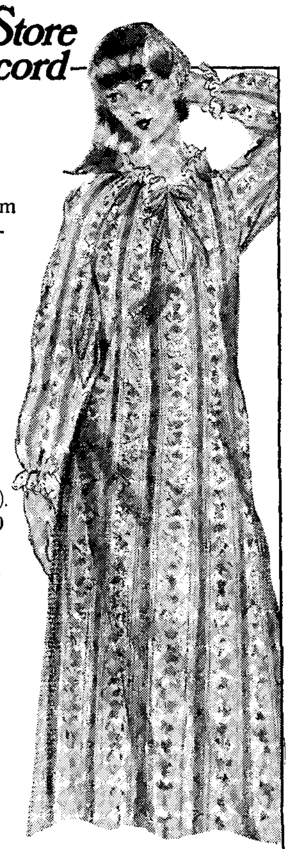
Quasar Electronics Company, Franklin Park, Illinois 60131 how Americans talked. But there were no poetic embellishments in Baum—it was magical prosiness. A child could feel he was being talked to straight. And in the Oz series the magic itself had an ordinary, everyday quality; the things that were endowed with personality were ridiculous domestic objects—a sawhorse or a lumpy old sofa. There was a basic topsy-turvy egalitarianism: animals, children, inanimate objects, witches, and fairies all talked the same simple Yankee language. It wasn't until I began reading the books aloud to my own child that I realized how much showmanship there was in them: the characters were vaudeville comics, the jokes were stage patter, and there was an acceptance of the corny enjoyment in puns and parodies. Even the outsize toys that came to life were like the "transformations" in stage shows for children. (In the new film, there's a suggestion of this in a robot camera and especially in a walking mike that looks like a Grandville lithograph.) Probably all these common stage devices were part of what I had experienced as blessed plainness. With the illustrations as a guide, a child reads along and projects himself into this funny, amiable vaudeville show; that may be part of why those of us who loved the books (and we were legion) had a special identification with them. We, too, joined a touring company. When I'd read ten or eleven of the books aloud and my daughter was ready to read the rest of the series by herself, I felt as if I'd been dropped along the road.

Baum's material is so essentially theatrical and unserious that it's adaptable to the song-and-dance gifts of almost any culture, and, in fact, white viewers can easily accept Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow, Nipsey Russell as the Tinman, and Ted Ross as the Lion. They give their roles black show-biz equivalents of the musical-comedy and burlesque styles that Ray Bolger and Bert Lahr, in particular, brought to the 1939 film. As far as the performers are concerned, the only problem is the insufferable Dorothy, who's some sort of superstar neuter, smiling through tears, with her arms always raised to the heavens. And she doesn't have the face of a dreamer. Judy Garland, with her fleshy vulnerability, provided a contrast to her three companions, but Diana Ross is as much an artifact as they are. And without her slinky costumes and her glamour makeup, she looks anorectic and forlorn. If "The Wiz" were a great black vaudeville show—a jazzy, satirical version of the fantasy story, with magic, songs and dances, and jokes—it could really be joyous. And even if it just had half a dozen cheerful numbers and a good spirit, a viewer probably could forgive everything that went wrong. But you come out of this film asking, "Couldn't thirty-five million dollars buy one good song?" Charlie Smalls' score for the Broadway show has been padded out with some new music, and adapted by Quincy Jones, but only a few of the songs are even tolerably pleasing, and some of these few are staged in ways that make us uncomfortable.

After the stiffly proper scenes in Harlem (the one in Brooklyn), the show finally livens up a little when Dorothy, in Oz, sees the Scarecrow. Only nineteen when the film was shot, Michael Jackson is a very young Scarecrow, and a sweetness comes through his Pagliacci makeup. His lack of experience as a screen actor works partly to his advantage; his ingenuousness is touching, though there are too many reaction shots of him being self-consciously dear, and you want to yell "Cut!" to the editor (Dede Allen). As a child, Jackson was a soprano in the Jackson Five, and he sings "You Can't Win" in his lovely high tenor voice. But he's not just stuck on a broomstick, like an ordinary scarecrow; he's crucified on a TV antenna, and so there's a masochistic edge to his sweetness, and the four black crows who dance around him aren't funny tormentors whose fast high stepping and bouncy rock dancing we can enjoy—they're making him suffer. He's hanging there. None of this is the actor's fault, or the fault of the dancers, either. It's the result of the crudeness of the moviemakers—reaching for an immediate "powerful" effect, and not considering what this bathos does to the spirit of the whole production. When Dorothy helps the Scarecrow down, the scene is hopelessly static: she looks solicitous and merciful, and he's moving on his knees as if he were about to sing "Bess, you is my woman now." When he begins to pull out bits of his paper stuffing and read homilies by great thinkers—Bacon, Confucius, Shakespeare, and so on—each one is a dead moment. Nobody has provided any zingers from black thinkers or jazz musicians.

The one performer who is able to ride right over the messy carelessness is Nipsey Russell. In the 1939 version, Jack Haley's Tin Woodman was the weakest of the major characters—though hardly in a class with the sugary inanity of Billie Burke's Glinda, the Good Witch. Nipsey Russell is a vast improvement; his first lines are



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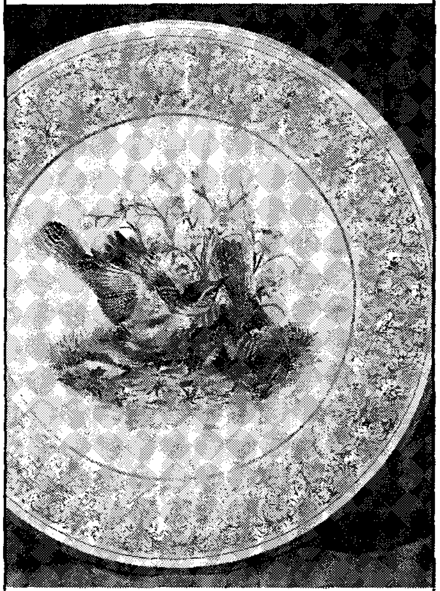

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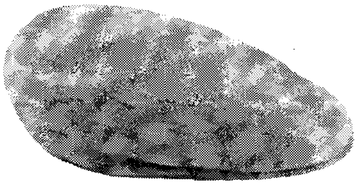

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funny, and he gives them rhythm and beat, and, though the lyrics of his song "What Would I Do If I Could Feel?" are unbelievably feeble ("What would I do/If I could suddenly feel/ And to know once again/What I feel is real?"), he sings them in a Dapper Dan night-club style—like a suave carnival barker—and on a nearby carousel the painted heads of three girl angels provide a backup chorus. (It's probably the most charming bit in the film, yet we see the angels only in cutaways; there isn't a single frame with the Tinman and the girls in the same composition—which is what we're dying to see.) This song and his second one, "Slide Some Oil to Me" (performed in the Fats Waller manner)—both relatively simply staged—are the film's best numbers. Like Ray Bolger and Bert Lahr in the 1939 version, Nipsey Russell understands that the roles are vaudeville-comedy turns. And, though his tap-dancing is unexciting, he shows here that all his years of playing the inoffensive black entertainer in front of white audiences haven't softened him as a performer; he has the true pro's integrity of style. His performance is marred only by a special effect. When Dorothy and the Lion have been drugged, the Tinman's tears falling on their faces wake them up. But instead of a magical teardrop Lumet gives us a faucet in full flood. We get an obscene twinge from this attempt at boffo humor.

Ted Ross has a smily scat humor in that awakening scene, and his lion costume may delight small children, but the "I'm a Mean Ole Lion" number is plodding (and this lion certainly could have used an Afro). As the con-man Wiz, Richard Pryor begins entertainingly, but his role peters out. And the film's negligence is bewildering: the big head that is an indispensable part of the Wiz's illusions is suddenly seen lying on its side, as if the Wiz had become demoralized and discarded it. (Pryor, with his spooked look, which gives a tension to whatever he does, seems such an obvious choice for the Cowardly Lion that the casting appears a little off.) Except for Michael Jackson's song and the two songs by Nipsey Russell, the only number that has any real fun to it is the hot, jumping, growly "Don't Nobody Bring Me No Bad News," sung by the Wicked Witch, Evillene (Mabel King). Wearing a heavy jewelled armature—a dress encrusted with knickknacks—and made up as a female ogre, with a headdress like a Carmen Miranda bowl of fruit that's sending out sinister tendrils, she yet manages to be a Kewpie doll. This sequence is staged in the most striking set in the movie—a huge, long sweatshop with patterned skylights, like something out of Manchester at the time of the industrial revolution—and, although the dancers do too much rushing up and down its length, the choreography is more clearly structured than it is in the other sets. (This may be the first musical number by Friedrich Engels.)

* * *

This film brings out all of Sidney Lumet's weaknesses as a director and almost none of his strengths. Style, sensitivity, attention to detail, a fine ear—these are what he gets along without in his commercial successes. His gift—and it's not a minor one—is for urban animal energy, for drive. But in a musical the energy springs from style. Lumet has worked for two years and employed the talents of hundreds of people to produce a film that looks rushed and cheap. The singing is eerie: superbly recorded dead, empty sound. There's none of the ambience of the city in these clear, post-synched tones. Visually, the film is static, rhythmless, chaotic. The big production numbers are free-form traffic jams. They're shot the way a fagged-out TV crew arriving at the scene of a riot in the streets might grab whatever it could from behind the police barriers. Was Lumet trying to get the whole block in every shot? Our eyes scan the rows of dancers, trying to sort out what we're meant to be looking at, but the dancers are photographed at such a distance, and with such low-key photography, that we don't really see a dance—just vast quantities of people milling around. Models parading in swishy designer clothes are merely part of the bedlam. And, though they're wearing red and then green and then gold, it's all really dun-colored. The big sequences seem dark and flattened out. In filmed-dance terms, "The Wiz" is a regression to the days when cameramen stood at the back of the theatre and shot the Ziegfeld Follies straight on.

The whole film has a stagnant atmosphere; there's never a breath of air or a relaxed sense of space. When a troupe of dancers appears (like the sirens on Poppy Street), we don't know where they've come from or where they disappear to. The production designer, Tony Walton (who also did the costumes), doesn't transform the New York locations—he doctors them. Walton's New York, with its Congoleum yellow brick road with imprinted bricks, is like your old high-school gym festooned with crêpe paper for the junior prom. This is not to suggest that the sets in the 1939 version were ideal; they had the vacuously literal M-G-M look. But at least they weren't confusing, and they didn't overwhelm the actors. Walton uses graffiti paintings for an almost Haitian urban-primitive effect, but the yellow brick road doesn't beckon us on, and the film has no over-all visual design to bind it together. Many of the sets in "The Wiz" seem designed only for long shots and don't work at all for middle-distance scenes. There's a pleasant matte of Manhattan with five Chrysler Buildings, and there are charming, slightly miniaturized yellow Checker cabs that suggest Red Grooms, but then when Dorothy and her companions arrive to see the Wiz at the Emerald City and it's the World Trade Center Plaza, you think, My God, that's where King Kong died. Many of the early scenes in Oz are underexposed, and the effect isn't mysterious, it's depressing. You have the feeling that the cinematographer, Oswald Morris, is trying to blur the edges of bum sets. There's so little visual differentiation in the scene in front of Walton's New York Public Library that stone and air melt into each other. There doesn't seem to be any sunlight or radiance in this Oz. With hundreds of dancers gyrating, it's Hades-on-the-Hudson.

And then, at the end, Lena Horne has her number. Surely the moviemakers should have learned from the mistakes of the M-G-M team and made Glinda a sexy Good Witch; Lena Horne could certainly have played her that way. Instead, she's done up like Elizabeth Taylor in "The Blue Bird"—in lyrical glitter. Shining down on us from the stars, and dressed like a blazing blue-and-silver Christmas tree, she says "Hello, Dorothy" with a condescension that leaves you breathless. After that, she makes a speech that sounds like a sermonette for the human-potential movement, and sings a gospel version of "Believe in Yourself" with an orchestration that suggests Mahalia Jackson. She's in beautiful deep voice, but gospel isn't what we want from Lena Horne, and it doesn't go with the tight muscles in her face. The first time there's a cut from her to a closeup of a black baby angel, it's amusing, but then there's another fat baby face, and another. Only the energy and anger emanating from Lena Horne—and cutting through the cloying effects—save her. Movies have

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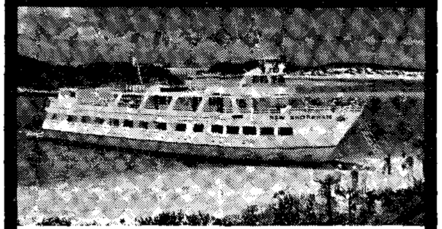

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sometimes succeeded in mixing satire and sentimentality, but this movie tries to mix satire and uplift.

The story is told as if the screenwriter had had no access to the book and had written the screenplay from disjointed memories of the 1939 film, seen on television. Once again, Dorothy's companions go off with her in order to ask the Wizard to give them what they believe they lack: brains for the Scarecrow, a heart for the Tinman, courage for the Lion. But in this movie, the Wizard doesn't give them the tokens that convince them that they now *have* what they needed. Dorothy lectures them instead, and after we've seen her call into the blank hole where the Tinman's heart should be and heard an echo, what are we to think when she tells him that he's had a heart *all along?* "The Wiz" doesn't give us the fairy-tale pleasure of seeing the pieces of the story fit into place. When Pryor's Wiz, who is young and, unlike Dorothy's other friends, completely human, tells her of his loneliness and pleads with her to keep him company, we half expect them to get together. Aunt Em has clearly implied that Dorothy needs sex, and if a romance with the Wiz would get her to stop kissing her dog and crying all the time, we'd certainly be for it. But Diana Ross's Dorothy is too nunlike to come out of Oz with anything but an improved character: she has learned not to be afraid. As for the poor Wiz, she tells him he has to "find himself." With all the talk about fulfillment and the endless lyrics about "feeling," "The Wiz" is like a month of Sundays in church.

—PAULINE KAEL

•

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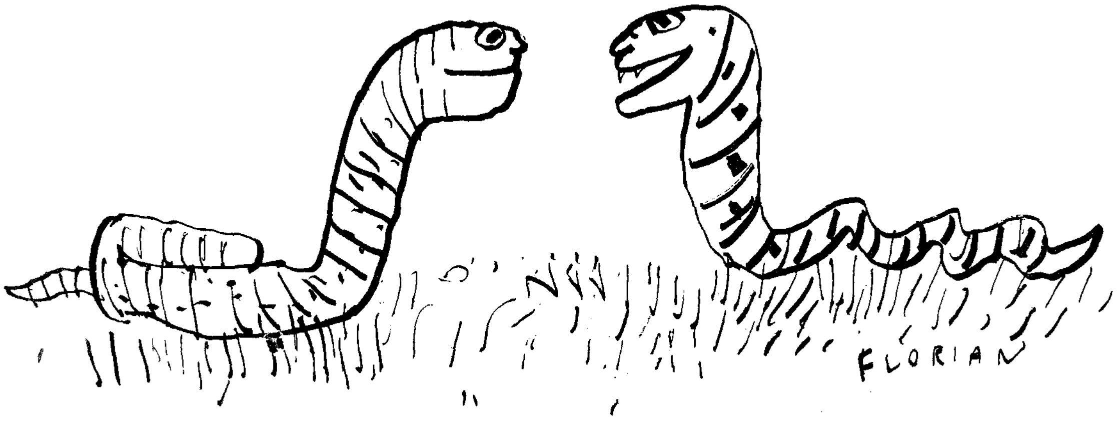
MUSICAL EVENTS

Island Symphony

THERE are several ways of approaching Peter Maxwell Davies' Symphony, which was given its first four American performances by the Philharmonic, under Zubin Mehta, this month. It is a major contemporary composer's deliberate—and yet, with hindsight over Davies' scores of the last decade, one might now say predestined—return to the tradition of the full-scale concert-hall symphony: it has four movements, is for full orchestra with triple woodwinds, and lasts fifty-six minutes; symphonies of Sibelius, Mahler, Schumann, and Beethoven played a part in its making. It is a romantic and picturesque work that holds evocations of sea, sky, and storm, of bright-edged light and unpolluted natural sound on the Orcadian island where since 1970 Davies has lived. It is the largest manifestation of its composer's almost medieval devotion to "secret" structures governing details of pitch and duration, his rapt transformations of plainchant melodies in a way to make modern listeners one with the ages, and his professed concern "to evolve a musical language simple and strong enough to make the complex forms with which I have become involved meaningful and audible—particularly with regard to functional harmony operating over and relating large spans of time." It is his most extended piece of big-orchestra writing, an essay in harmonizing the bright, spare, luminous sonorities projected in his chamber works of recent years and the sonic surge and tempest that can be summoned by a full symphony orchestra. And it is a "visionary" piece: in a program note for the London première (on February 2nd this year) the composer said, "Perhaps it would help to put listeners in a frame of mind to be at least sympathetic to the intention, if not the result, to know that possibly the creative artists I admire most are two twelfth-century writers, whose language, to my mind, builds the only sound structures parallel to the statement made by the medieval cathedrals—Dante and St. Thomas Aquinas."

In the New York program book, the note was abridged and that sentence was omitted. The Philharmonic had prepared its performances thoroughly but had done less than it should have to prepare its audiences to receive the exacting composition. It might have hired and shown to its subscribers the Arts Council of Great Britain's fifty-minute film "One Foot in Eden," an introduction to Davies' later music in its Orcadian setting. Besides the trinkets for sale at the new "gift shop," there are now serious books and records—but among them was not the Nonesuch recording of "Dark Angels" (1974), one of Davies' Orkney song cycles; or the Argo recording of the Second Fantasia on John Taverner's "In Nomine" (1964), Davies' earlier composition on a symphonic scale; or even the study score of the Symphony itself, which Boosey & Hawkes put into print before its first performance. The Philharmonic might have invited the Music Project to play, as one of the "pre-concert" recitals favored by Boulez, "A Mirror of Whitening Light," which it introduced to America earlier this year; this chamber-orchestra work, which Davies wrote immediately after the Symphony, is one of the most attractive and readily accessible examples of his recent style. The composer, it is true, did talk about the Symphony at one of the Friday-morning lectures held in the chorus room of Fisher Hall, and provided an introduction valuable to the handful of people who attended it. But those lectures are not widely publicized. (Davies' comparable talk before the London Prom performance of the Symphony this summer filled the large concert hall of the Royal College of Music.) It was adventurous of Mehta to bill the piece. His opening run of concerts with the Philharmonic has made it clear that his first care, like that of his predecessor, is for contemporary music. And that is good. Less good that in the week before the Symphony his Schubert ("Rosamunde" music and Fifth Symphony) and his Richard Strauss (Four Last Songs and "Salome" closing scene, with Montserrat Caballé as soloist) proved not worth writing about. But if he is to carry his listeners with him, and continue Boulez's endeavor to create a Philharmonic audience eager to discover, understand, and enjoy what today's composers are writing, his efforts need to be seconded by something like the British pizzazz and high-pressure, insistent publicity for contemporary music, coupled with ready availability of information, rather than the gentlemanly American reticence that prevails in Fisher Hall. New York's serious radio stations might be roped in. Would, say, WKCR be reluctant to carry repeats of the Friday-morning lectures and other related programs, which could be prominently billed in the Philharmonic program books? The program book for the Davies Symphony did not even tell audiences the date and station on which the concert can be heard again. (It is Sunday afternoon, December 10th, at three, on WQXR.) If the Symphony did not, except among a band of enthusiasts, become quite the smash-hit and talk-of-the-town event it was in London, the reason was partly that it was not heard in context, and as a climax and summation, by audiences familiar with Davies' music of the last eight years. There had been *some* preparation for it. During the 1976 Celebration of Contemporary Music (that "inaugural festival" which has so far had no successor), the Orcadian song cycle "Stone Litany" was performed in the Juilliard Theatre. Later that year, the Fires of London, the ensemble that Davies directs, played his "Ave Maris Stella" in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. And in April this year there was



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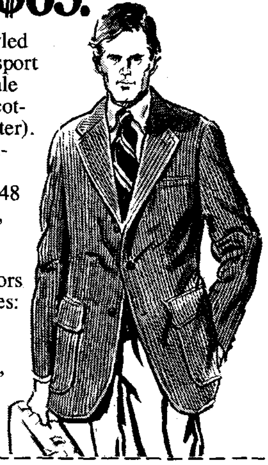

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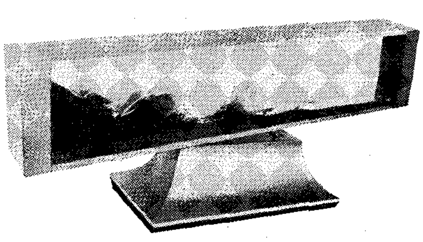

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the Music Project's "A Mirror of Whitening Light," in Town Hall. But those were all single events, unrepeated, and the Philharmonic audience may have missed them.

"A MIRROR OF WHITENING LIGHT," or "Speculum Luminis Dealbensis," is a twenty-two-minute composition for fourteen players. Two plainsongs underlie its melodies, and a "magic square"—a device that, the composer says, "suitably used, can generate perfectly recognizable and workable sequences of pitches and rhythmic lengths"—acts as an agent in their transformations. The connotations of the title are part alchemical, referring to the process whereby base metals and, by metaphorical extension, the soul may be whitened and purified, and part scenic: "Fancifully, perhaps, I often see the great cliff-bound bay before my window where the Atlantic and the North Sea meet as a huge alchemical crucible, rich in speculative connotations, and at all times a miracle of ever-changing reflected light, and it is this which is the physical Mirror of the title." The opening section presents in quick succession five vividly atmospheric, mercurial, and contrasting "impressions" of light, of transformation processes, and of harmonic adventures grounded on a fundamental C; and from these the work grows, rising to a brilliant *jeu de vagues*, subsiding in a long, beautiful coda. The Music Project is a lively, talented young ensemble, New York's bright, fresh alternative to the established Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. (This season, the Project's regular concert series is on Sunday afternoons in St. Stephen's Church, on West Sixty-ninth Street; on each bill there is a Schubert chamber work.) Its performance of the "Mirror," conducted by Gerard Schwarz, was alert, sparkling, and sensitive.

I HAVE never been to the Orkneys, but have heard and read much about them since Davies went to live there, and have "heard" and "seen" them in his Orcadian scores. Orkney literature—from the twelfth-century "Orkneyinga Saga" to the poems and prose of Edwin Muir and George Mackay Brown—is strong and distinctive. One believes Muir when he says, "Strange blessings, never in Paradise known, Fall from these beclouded skies." Sober music critics return from the midsummer St. Magnus Festival, in Orkney, to write with rapture of "the light and the landscape of the far North," where "well after midnight, sea and sky meet in clear blue and copper, the land a thin black shape of the swathes of colour," and of the paradoxes in "a beautiful but treeless rustic landscape, at once lush and austere; a land of midnight sun and midday dark, of grand and tragic history and gentle, Liberal politics." On the island of Hoy, living without electricity, drawing water from a spring, and hewing wood for his fire, Davies has rediscovered and reaffirmed human scale in his recent music. It sometimes reminds me of a remark made by the Northern symphonist Carl Nielsen: "The glutted must be taught to regard a melodic third as a gift of God, a fourth as an experience, and a fifth as the supreme bliss." It is not surprising that plainchant continues to provide the inspiration for Davies' themes, or that an almost reverent feeling for interval makes them memorable. The composer has said, "Living in London, and travelling, one's sense of hearing becomes dulled and distorted; a single jet taking off blurs one's hearing for hours afterwards. . . . But after a few days of solitude at Hoy I begin to hear again." By attentive listening to Davies' music, ears dulled by subway, siren, and aircraft sounds, by the cacophony of New York streets, "begin to hear again." Of course, there can also be violence in his music, and there is in the Symphony: "Boulders that must be ten to fifteen feet across are there grinding on each other three hundred feet below the house. It's a kind of physical pulsation that you hear with your whole body." Behind the human actions and dreams, there is the terrible impersonal grandeur of the Atlantic storms—and also the long, violent history of the islands. In Davies' recent scores, the past is a living element in the present. "Stone Litany" was inspired by a Neolithic Orkney monument. The opera "The Martyrdom of St. Magnus" treats of incidents in the "Orkneyinga Saga," takes musical inspiration from the thirteenth-century Hymn to St. Magnus, and was first performed, last year, in the twelfth-century cathedral where Magnus is buried. (The American première was given at the Aspen Festival last July.) The moment of the martyrdom is set in the present day and wherever the opera is being performed: "It is no longer possible to persuade ourselves that 'such things couldn't happen here.' " The score becomes a nightmare phantasmagoria of distorted dance music through centuries from the twelfth to the twentieth; transformation and parody techniques pioneered in Davies' Expressionist compositions of the sixties become alarmingly potent. Then, in the final scene, the twelfth century and the present are merged: monks chant a litany that Magnus himself might have sung, but the resonances around that melody and the visionary solo song of a timeless Orkney woman are heard and set down with a twentieth-century ear.

DEATH sentences on the symphony and the symphony orchestra have often been pronounced. (At a Cheltenham Festival debate in 1971, Davies himself seconded the proposition that the extinction of the symphony orchestra was inevitable.) Both refuse to die. This summer, in London alone new symphonies by Lennox Berkeley (No. 4), John McCabe (No. 3), Andrzej Panufnik (his Sinfonia di Sfere), and Michael Tippett (No. 4) were performed and broadcast. The première of Anthony Milner's Second Symphony, in Liverpool, was broadcast, and so was Panufnik's Sinfonia Mistica. A series of thirteen BBC Tuesday-afternoon programs, "Symphonies from the North," provided a survey of busy symphonic activity in Scandinavia since Carl Nielsen. For some years, a full-scale symphony seems to have been forcing itself on Davies. His "Worldes Blis" (1969)—as Stephen Pruslin points out in the March issue of the magazine *Tempo*—is in effect a symphonic first movement containing hints of a scherzo and slow movement; "St. Thomas Wake" (also 1969) is a symphonic scherzo, and "Stone Litany" could be likened to a symphonic slow movement. Davies' Symphony began life, in 1973, as an orchestral piece called "Black Pentecost," commissioned by London's Philharmonia Orchestra; according to the Philharmonic program note, Mehta was to have conducted it with the Philharmonia. Although finished, it was withdrawn before performance, because, the composer said, "I felt very keenly that this single movement was incomplete. . . . It was, as it were, budding and putting out shoots, and although I had firmly drawn a final double bar-line, the music was reaching out across it, suggesting transformations beyond the confines of a single movement." That piece, refashioned after the first movement of Sibelius's Fifth, became a lento evaporating into a scherzo and is now the second movement of the Symphony. The first movement is a series of charged developments and transformations, articulated by climaxes and

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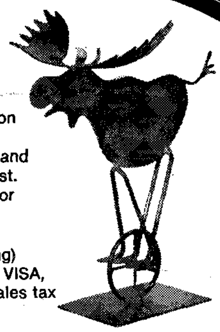

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"holds" that open out in the succeeding sections, and unified by a theme of emphatic rhythmic outline. The third movement is "another invocation of the extraordinary, almost unearthly, treeless winter land and seascape of the Orkney island where I live," but it is not "merely descriptive and atmospheric;" it is also a slower, more relaxed example of the transformation processes found elsewhere in the work. The finale is a kaleidoscope of changing textures, including suggestions of gull cries and birdsong; a mysterious duet for harp and timpani, with touches of added color from marimba and double-bass; rapid trumpet signals piercing a dense web of slow-woven melodies; and, at the last, a long, fierce crescendo abruptly cut short, as Sibelius's Fifth Symphony is, by some stabbing chords. Descriptions are apt to stress section-by-section construction. Repeated hearing is needed to disclose the long continuous thought that runs through the movements and unites them one to another. At a first hearing, the sheer eventfulness and beauty of the music—melodies that seem to stretch out toward some far horizon, the soaring song of a solo violin, slow surging and massing, swift, sudden flurries—can hold a listener enthralled.

THE Symphony is very difficult to conduct and to play. Young Simon Rattle, who conducted the London première, learned its secrets by bringing it to performance point with his own orchestra, the BBC Scottish, before doing it in public with the Philharmonia. With the Philharmonia, he has recorded it, for London Records. (The disc is not yet published.) Mehta's and the Philharmonic's interpretation, I think, was not quite as exciting, picturesque, or committedly energetic and loving as Rattle's and the Philharmonia's; but the Philharmonic became more and more confident during the run. I "just listened" to the first and third performances, followed the second and fourth with the score, noted no more than a few small inaccuracies and inadequacies, and admired very much not only the professional competence of the players but also the increasing eloquence with which they sounded the long melodies and the bright, clear colors.

—ANDREW PORTER

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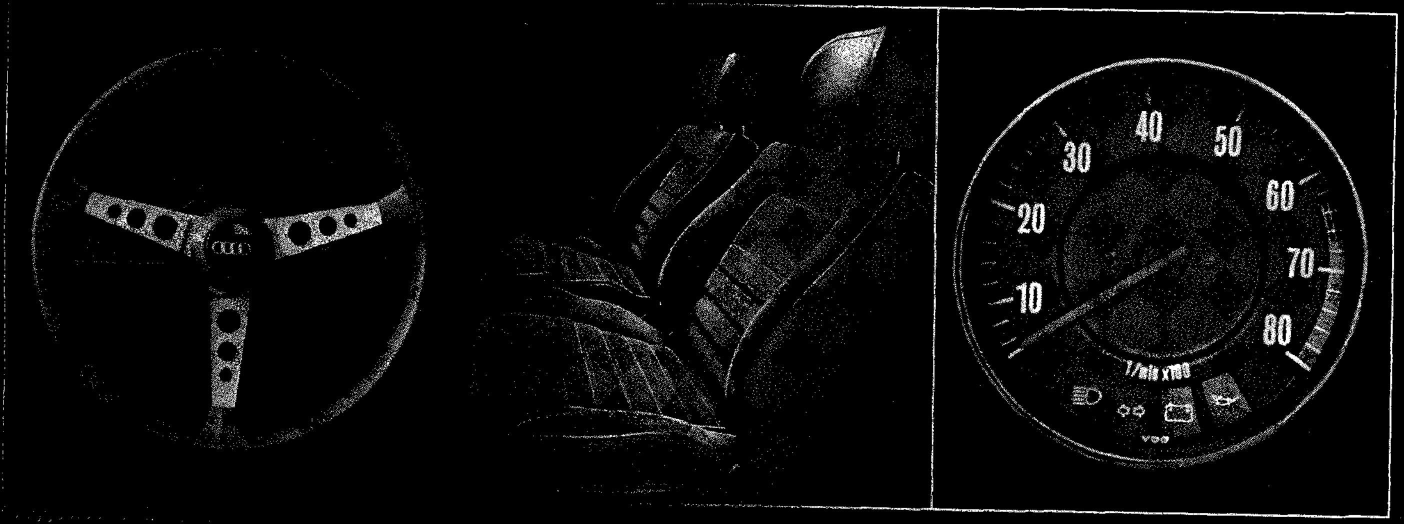

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A LOT of people want a piece of the shore. The descendants of Americans who once pushed the frontiers of the country farther and farther west into the interior have lately moved steadily northeast, hugging the coast. The appeal of the continent's interior in the nineteenth century came partly from the assumption that it was limitless. The appeal of the northeast shorefront has come partly from the knowledge that it is limited. The people who want a piece of it believe that it may someday be "gone"—too expensive to buy. Watching the march up the shore, I have sometimes imagined that in twenty or thirty years people from New York and Philadelphia and Boston will be lining up to buy shorefront lots on Baffin Island, just across the Davis Strait from Greenland. It will all start with speculators, rotund in their layers of expensive parkas, flying over the fjords and coves, as they flew over the coast of Maine in the middle sixties, looking for the promontory with dramatic views or the peninsula with good access but plenty of protection.

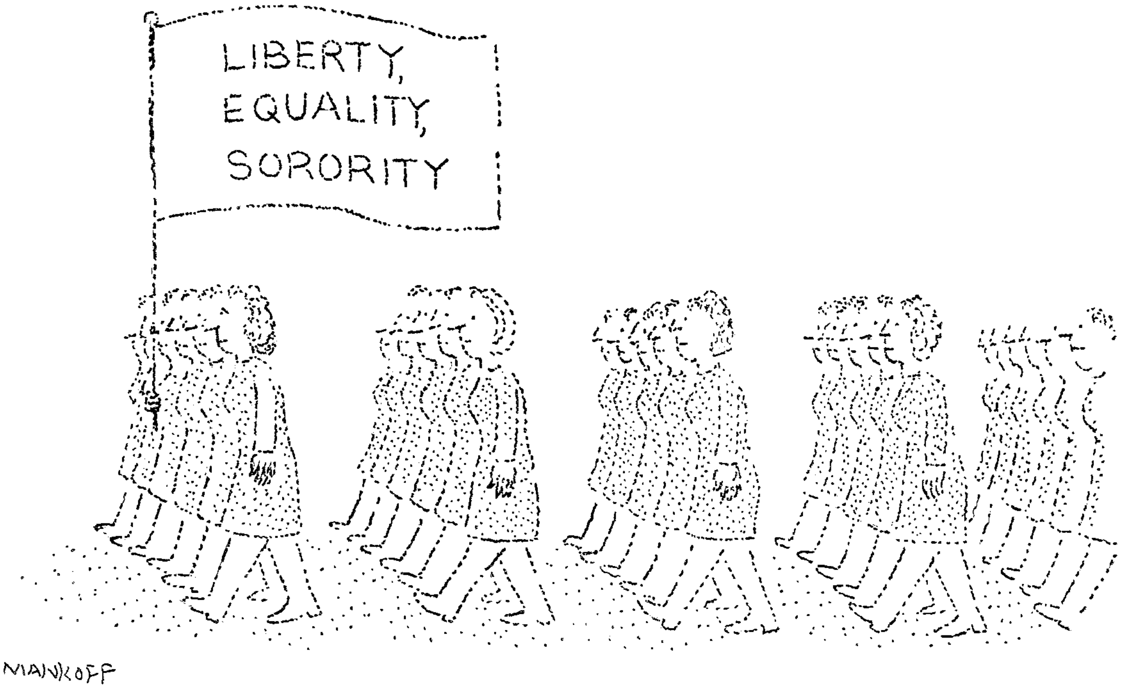
"It's pretty far from a population center," the venture-capital group's man will say to the promoter—shouting to be heard above the howl of the Arctic wind.

"Air transportation's getting better every day," the promoter will say. "And more and more people have chunks of leisure time. And Gander's only twelve hundred miles away. What we're talking about here is eight miles of prime shorefront land on the Atlantic Ocean, and shorefront land on the Atlantic Ocean is almost *gone!*"

The venture-capital man will nod his head in sharp, quick movements, hoping that constant exercise will keep his eyelids from freezing shut, and will then start talking about how much investors will be able to write off during the project's first four tax years.

I suppose most people believe that the quest for shorefront land will never even reach Labrador, but then most people used to assume that it would never reach Washington County, Maine, the easternmost point of the United States. Washington County is a nasty seven or eight hours' drive from Boston. In this century, it has been known less for its shoreline than for its poverty. By just about any way of measuring, it is the poorest county in Maine, a poor state. Its coastline is not lacking some of the features that summer visitors to Maine have always considered picturesque—rocky beaches, lobster traps, clamdiggers—but its towns and villages tend to have the sort of ragged look that summer people might associate more with coal miners than with lobstermen. The main street of Machias, the county seat, would not remind anyone of Bar Harbor or Camden or Kennebunk or any of the well-kept summer villages within easy range of Boston. Roque Bluffs, six miles south of Machias, where sixty-three lots on a promontory called Chambers Point were put up for auction recently, has a traditional white church across from a white clapboard town hall, but there is a mobile home next door. Although one family has maintained a sort of summer compound in Roque Bluffs for about as long as anybody can remember, it was only a few years ago that people buying and selling land in the rest of the town began to distinguish between land that was on the shore and land that was not. When Chambers Point—more than a hundred acres of land jutting into Englishman Bay—changed hands in 1960, it changed hands as a woodlot. Clarence Randall, who bought it then and sold it to its present owner in 1967, was among those who gathered on what the subdivision plan designates as Lot No. 24 to watch the auction. A dour-looking man from Cutler, a Washington County coastal town not far away, Randall stood almost hidden behind a white birch, silently noting prices on the mimeographed sheet of descriptions and conditions which had been distributed by the auctioneer. When Randall made his purchase in 1960, according to the tax stamps filed on the deeds in the Washington County courthouse, he paid about twenty-five hundred dollars for the entire parcel.

LOT No. 13. All right, who'll start me out at five thousand on this one and go? . . . O.K., five I've got. Six where? Five thousand we've got. Looking for six where? . . . Six I've got. Who's going to give me seven? Two hundred ten feet of deepwater frontage. That's a nice lot. . . . Seven thousand I've got. Are we all done? Sev-



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ALONG most of the shore from above Bar Harbor toward Baffin Island—Down East Maine, the Canadian Maritime Provinces—local people still speak of having awakened one morning to find that property that had always been bought and sold as woodlot or farmland or pasture had suddenly become shorefront footage. On the Washington County coast, the morning came in about 1968. The man who bought Chambers Point from Randall—Robert Spickler, who then listed his address as Norwalk, Connecticut, but later moved to Maine—contracted for the property in 1967, before the new interest in shorefront became an all-out boom. The guess around Machias is that he paid around thirty thousand dollars. That would have represented a profit pleasing to Clarence Randall—more than ten times his original investment, after eight years—except that another guess around Machias is that Spickler may have got that much money out of the property by selling a couple of prime lots in the early seventies. "Between 1969 and 1972, I could just sit here in my office and write contracts," Ivan Hanscom, a Machias real-estate man, told me. "They didn't even want to go out and look at the property."

In 1972, Chambers Point still looked the way it had looked when Randall used it to cut spruce and pulpwood, but its value had been enhanced by more than just the increased value of shorefront land. In 1968, Spickler had filed a plan with the state, subdividing the property into sixty-five lots. In the early seventies, pressure from Maine residents concerned about the environment resulted in a series of stringent laws governing subdivisions—laws about soil-percolation tests and fresh-water supplies and clearances from local planning boards. For developers, the new laws meant preparing environmental-impact reports and filing legal papers and waiting out planning-board delays. It all cost money. As a subdivision that had been filed before the new laws went into effect, Chambers Point was exempt from their requirements—what real-estate people call "grandfathered." By not having developed the property and advertised the lots before 1972, though, Spickler found himself on the wrong side of another historical development in Maine real estate: about that time, the market for shorefront land in Washington County began to dry up.

Some people in Washington County believe that the slowdown in buying was caused by the Arab oil embargo—followed quickly by a spate of publicity about an Indian land-claim case which led some out-of-staters to believe that land titles were no longer safe in Maine. In the early seventies, of course, inflation and a sag in the economy were slowing up real-estate sales even in places that had no problem at all with Indians or long automobile drives. In Washington County, shorefront-land prices stopped going up, and buyers became scarce. The market has not significantly improved since. Prices have not dropped drastically, presumably on the theory that the trek up the northeast coast will continue as soon as better times come along. "I think we'll have another cycle," Ivan Hanscom told me. "If we live long enough."

After 1972, someone who found himself wanting to realize some cash from a large parcel of shorefront land could hardly count on doing it through conventional lot-selling. By this summer, a decade after the boom started, the earliest shorefront subdivision in Roque Bluffs, which has been marketed aggressively by three different owners, still had not sold all of its lots. The lots on Chambers Point, as far as anybody in Roque Bluffs knew, had still not been offered for sale to the public; hardly anybody in Roque Bluffs, in fact, knew that Chambers Point had been legally subdivided. Then, late this summer, an issue of *Down East*, a Maine magazine with a wide out-of-state circulation and a reputation as a showcase for summer real-estate advertisements, appeared on the stands with a two-page advertisement about an auction of "SIXTY-THREE OCEANFRONT LOTS and stunning hillside lots overlooking the sea"—on Chambers Point, in Roque Bluffs, Maine. "We sincerely believe you may be able to buy these lots for as little as $25 per shoreline foot. (Of course, this depends on the competitive bidding)," the advertisement said. "The owners, a

Maine family, have held this property since the 1960s. They want it sold quickly. Naturally, to sell anything quickly, it must be offered at a bargain price." Most people in Washington County had never heard of auctioning as a way of selling lots for quick cash. The advertisement in *Down East*—part of an advertising campaign that also included newspapers in Portland and Boston and Springfield and Bangor and New York—was the first that most residents of Roque Bluffs had heard about plans for Chambers Point since Spickler bought it. Once land on the coast has been transformed into shorefront footage, its principal market is no longer with the people who used to buy and sell it as woodlot or pasture.

LOT No. 17. Three hundred feet, plus or minus, prime deepwater frontage. Two-point-four acres. Next to No. 18, which sold for eighteen thousand in 1972. As soon as No. 17 is cleared of some of the thick growth, it will look like a two-and-a-half-acre park worth thirty thousand dollars, at least. Who's going to start me out at ten thousand on this and go? Lot No. 17. Looking for ten thousand. . . . Do I hear ten thousand on Lot No. 17? . . . O.K. Pass.

IN the past ten years, response to shorefront subdivisions has become a ritual with a number of well-established roles. It is customary for local environmentalists to deplore the development as a destroyer of the wetlands or the clam flats, and for the developer to deplore the local environmentalists as a few rich newcomers more concerned about their views than about the economic well-being of the town. Main Street merchants often side with the developer, being more concerned with economic well-being than with views. Sometimes, local politicians are quoted with a few kind words about the development—either because they see it as a way to broaden the town's tax base or because they have been hired as consultants by the developer. Full-time residents may grumble that a summer-home development will result in their assessments being raised or in their traditional access to the water being fenced off. The developer customarily approaches the town planning board with elaborate courtesy—the way a rich suitor might approach his intended's poor but proud parents.

The ritual did not seem to be called for in Roque Bluffs. There are no Main Street merchants, since there are no stores. Roque Bluffs amounts to no

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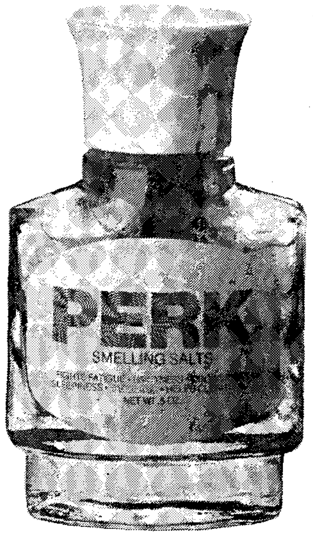
more than a few hundred people who happen to live along one of two or three roads that pass through a large, essentially rural area. A few newcomers of the sort that people on the tip of Long Island call "year-round summer people" have settled in during the past several years, but the most important factor in Roque Bluffs' recent population increase has been a town ordinance limiting clamdigging on town clam flats to residents. Most of the new houses in town are not gray-shingled beach cottages but mobile homes or small bungalows facing the road. Town residents have access to the ocean at a state-owned beach. The clamdiggers are less concerned about the attraction the area has for summer people than about the attraction it has for other clamdiggers. A lot of people in Roque Bluffs have never been on Chambers Point, which is a couple of miles down a dirt road from the highway. It would be difficult for the average resident to see how any development on Chambers Point, short of a nuclear power plant or a major regional amusement park, would have much effect on Roque Bluffs one way or the other. Still, a headline in the Bangor *Daily News* a week before the auction said, "BEACH LOT AUCTION WORRIES TOWN."

The worries varied. A couple of town officials expressed some doubt that all of the necessary papers had been filed. A selectman reflected some fear that the development would bring year-round residents who would require road maintenance and even schooling for their children. There was talk among both selectmen and clamdiggers that the owner of Chambers Point might not have a legal right-of-way to it, or, if he did, that he might not have obtained it in a straightforward manner. There was a lot of picking at the language of the auction advertisements—questions about which waterfront became mudfront at low tide and how many lots really would permit lobstering just offshore. There were people in Roque Bluffs who resented having to find out about the auction in out-of-town newspapers, and there were people who resented the idea of land in their town being sold by auction, a process they associated with bankruptcy sales or shady deals. A lot of families in Roque Bluffs have been there since its settlement, in the eighteenth century—there are professors at the University of Maine's Machias campus who know a Washington County student's home town simply by his family name—and their land has been what they have to pass on from generation to generation. "It doesn't set well with me," I was told when I brought up the subject of the auction with Walter Morse, the head of the town planning board, who farms some and cuts some wood and manages some inherited summer property of his own. "It's too bad to dispose of land that way. I'd hate to think that my land would ever go on the block."

LOT No. 4. Give me five thousand on this and let's go. . . . Give me four on this one and let's go. . . . Any interest? . . . Pass. . . . Lot No. 5. One-point-one acres. A hundred fifty feet, plus or minus, of waterfront. Give me five on this one and let's go. . . . Four? . . . Pass.

"CONSIDERING there were so few people," the auctioneer told me after the auction, "I wasn't completely disappointed." At eleven, the announced starting time, only twenty people had registered for bidding paddles. By the time the auction finally got under way, twenty minutes later, about forty people, some of them strictly observers, had gathered around a couple of white birch trees thirty feet or so from the auctioneer. They seemed quiet and uncomfortable—a cold wind having forced them to tug their jackets around them. Lot No. 24 commands a panoramic view of the bay, but for much of the early morning, a period during which potential bidders were invited to inspect the property, the view had been hidden in fog. Rain the previous day had dealt unkindly with the road—a one-lane dirt road that was only this summer completed to the end of Chambers Point. "Here's what to say about the road," Robert Spickler, an excitable man wearing a belted corduroy jacket and a silk scarf, had told his assistants before the auction. "The road is adequate. It's a tribute to the road, after all that rain. There are no traffic jams here. If they want traffic jams, they'll have to go to Portland or Boston or New York."

Before bidding started, the auctioneer had announced that the paucity of bidders would mean one change in the ground rules: instead of retaining the right to accept or reject the results of the auction as a package, Spickler would retain the right to accept or reject winning bids lot by lot. A stockbroker from Burlington, Vermont, who made the winning bid on Lot No. 13—seventy-five hundred dollars, or eleven dollars more per shorefront foot than the bargains the auction advertisements had predicted—was later informed that his bid had been rejected.



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Spickler told him he could indeed buy Lot No. 13 if he wanted to, but for ten thousand five hundred dollars. The stockbroker, a friendly young man with a cheerful openness that might lead someone meeting him to take him for a gym coach rather than a stockbroker, had driven over early in the morning with his wife and two small children. He was the first person to register. He and his family had spent the time before the auction tramping through the woods on the lot he had picked out. Although some of the people standing near him at the auction thought he had been treated unfairly—the opening bid asked for by the auctioneer on Lot No. 13, after all, had been five thousand dollars—the stockbroker seemed less angry than disappointed. An hour later, he bid with apparent success on another shorefront lot, but that bid was also rejected. Finally, he and Spickler agreed on a price of ten thousand dollars for Lot No. 13.

I saw the stockbroker on his lot after the auction had ended. He and his wife and their children were about to have a picnic on a meadow that led down to the water. It was a lovely meadow. The price he had paid for the lot, about forty-seven dollars a front foot, may have been a lot higher than the bargains predicted in the advertisements but it was still well below the going rate for shorefront footage in Roque Bluffs. The stockbroker said he was not concerned about some of the drawbacks to the lots that had been brought up by other people in the crowd—whether there were adequate guarantees about road maintenance and utilities, for instance. He had no plans to build on the lot for years. He thought of it, in fact, as a retirement place, even though he seemed thirty or forty years from retirement. He was delighted with his lot. He had a piece of the shore. —CALVIN TRILLIN

•

MR. WAGER, MEET MR. EHRLICH

[Lead sentences from book reviews featured side by side in City News]

by Walter Wager	by Arnold Ehrlich
As they say in the story departments out at The Burbank Studios, this one is a real page turner.	In certain publishing circles there is a book known as a "page turner". . .

•

EDMONTON—The Queen, who is scheduled to throw out the first official at today's opening of the XI Commonwealth Games, is staying at our hotel.—*Eric Whitehead in the Vancouver (B.C.) Province.*

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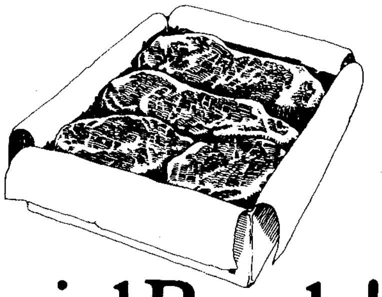

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FOOTBALL

What Next?

HAIL, Columbia, happy land! For last Saturday it finished off its annual round robin against the Big Three of the Ivy League by overtaking Yale late in the day with a field goal—the first ever in young Taussig's career—and holding on to go home with a 3–3 tie, though only after Taussig had missed, in the very last seconds, the field goal that would have toppled Yale. (Columbia had already put down both Harvard and Princeton.) No one went much of anywhere in that match: Columbia had to punt twelve times, and Yale eight. And Yale, a far better-armed outfit than Columbia, shed all its advantages by handing the ball over on no fewer than seven misplays. Seemingly content at having amassed ten touchdowns in its first three outings this autumn, the Falling Angel of the League has assembled but two field goals this past fortnight. Pennsylvania, which looks hot one day and chilled on another, was nipped—unlikely as the fact appears—by Lafayette, at 20–19, last Saturday, and Princeton, which had won nothing at all this semester, nipped Colgate, at 13–12, in a sort of consolation encounter: Colgate had won only once this year. At that, Colgate, coming from behind, nearly nipped Princeton: its touchdown half a minute before time ran out was followed by a pass try that fell into Princeton hands. Crissy, running for Princeton, accounted for a hundred and thirty-six yards, and no Princetonian had done that well since Isom, who graduated this spring, turned in his uniform; Colosimo, the innards of what offense Colgate has mustered this season, accounted for his eighth touchdown of the autumn. Cornell, which has been enjoying its best season in some years, finally met more than its match in Brown, which, it is true, had to pull up from astern to carry the day, at 21–13. Still, Cornell's four fumbles did not assist its cause, nor did the passing of Whipple, at quarter for Brown: two of his throws—neither of which went to the celebrated Farnham—ended up as touchdowns. Cornell enjoyed a good first half, and acquired a lead of 13–7; the rest was all Brown, which is up where it belongs, at the head of the League. Its major afternoon, though, may be its out-of-the-League match with Holy Cross, just a few days away.

IT was a darkling weekend for the Service teams. Army, in the Deep South, went down before Florida, at 31–7, and its pass defense, never in the best of working order this season, was fragmentary. Notre Dame rolled over Air Force, at 38–15—an Air Force whose luck in the big, wide world outside the Ivy League appears to have run out. But Navy, encountering an old friend, William and Mary, made it six in a row, at 9–0, for this term of duty. A couple of years from now, by the way, Army will start putting aside some of its present-day outsize opponents in favor of encounters within the League—a return to the status quo of a long time ago, and a welcome one.

CAMBRIDGE, a community in which the best of town and gown live with one another in excellent harmony and dine together in a plethora of old and new restaurants and bars and pavilions, is the utopia of university football, and the delights of its setting will not be damaged by the ugliness of the just dedicated Kennedy School of Government Building. This setting was enhanced last weekend by the match between Dartmouth and Harvard—one that Dartmouth, trim and fit and knowing and fleet, should have carried off, for Harvard was country-bumpkin in the first half hour of play and Larry Brown (the more famous of Harvard's two Browns this season) was throwing the ball over the heads of his receivers with remarkable consistency. Teevens, at quarter for Dartmouth, has become a top-level running-and-tossing player; his new fullback, Dufresne, a sophomore who weighs only a hundred and ninety pounds, makes moves with superlative alacrity and accuracy; Shula, his new split end, and son of the Dolphins' coach, is another useful addition. But, especially in the second half, Dufresne was more than equalled by Harvard's Polillio, a senior halfback who weighs in at only a hundred and eighty pounds, and Larry Brown began throwing strikes instead of misses, and, for the fifth time in a row, Dartmouth came in second to its old rival, at 24–19. Harvard draws penalties for long counts and for its peculiar brand of stunting in the line, and its forwards are a mixed lot, and Beling, a masterly linebacker, is not in the best of health, and so on and on, but when Brown is on target with Polillio and his ends, the yeast that is always in the team gets to work.

In the Ivy League, there is enough elbowroom for smaller chaps like Dufresne and Polillio to take on Napoleonic stature. We come now to the match, up in Hanover last Friday, between Dartmouth and Harvard freshmen—Harvard 21, Dartmouth 20—and won at the very last moment. Cuccia, Harvard's most likely freshman quarter, stands a mere five feet eight, and he looks no more viable than the slight but mighty Bobby Leo, who ran so well for the Harvard varsity some years back. But, against Dartmouth, Cuccia ran for a hundred and ten yards and threw for another sixty-eight; he set up the winning touchdown with a sprint of forty-two yards, and made that touchdown forty seconds before curtain time by running the ball in himself. He will be on view on his home ground, against the Yale freshmen, on November 17th, the day before The Game. —J. W. L.

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CLEAR DAYS ON THE LEGAL SCENE

[*From the Berks County (Pa.) Law Journal*]

The new "J.A." series of Pennsylvania Statutes will be confusing for some time unless attorneys take the time to study them.

"J.A. 76" which is the Judiciary Code of 1976 (1976-142) is suspended until the effective date of "J.A.R.A." which is the Judiciary Act Repealer, Act (1978-53).

There are two effective dates for repealers. Those under Section 4(a) of J.A.R.A. take effect one year after the general effective date of the Act. Those under Section 4(b) take effect two years after the effective date of J.A.R.A.

As used in J.A.R.A. "immediately" means on the general effective date of this Act and not on the enactment date of J.A.R.A.

There is a new Title 2 of the Consolidated Statutes called "Administration Law and Procedure". This is contained in Section 5 of J.A.R.A. It will be an Appendix to Title 1 of Purdon's Statutes.

Since Section 43 of J.A.R.A. provides that J.A.R.A. itself will take effect 60 days after enactment, both "J.A.R.A." and "J.A. 76" take effect generally on June 27, 1978.

Read 1 Pa. C.S. Section 1952 and 1 Pa. C.S. Section 1974 for further edification.

Title 42 of Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes relates to judiciary and judicial procedure. "J.A. 76" enacted the Judicial Code to become a new Title 42 repealing old chapter 83 of Title 42.

Section 29 of "J.A. 76" stated that none of its provisions would take effect until Section 29(4) of the Act was absolutely repealed. This repeal was effected by the final enactment of "J.A.R.A.".

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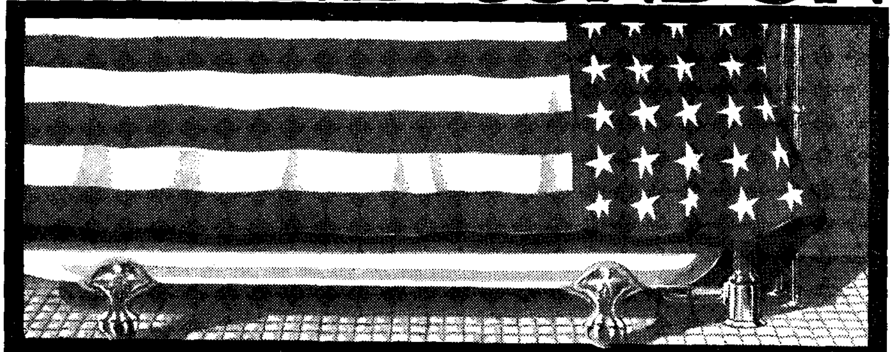

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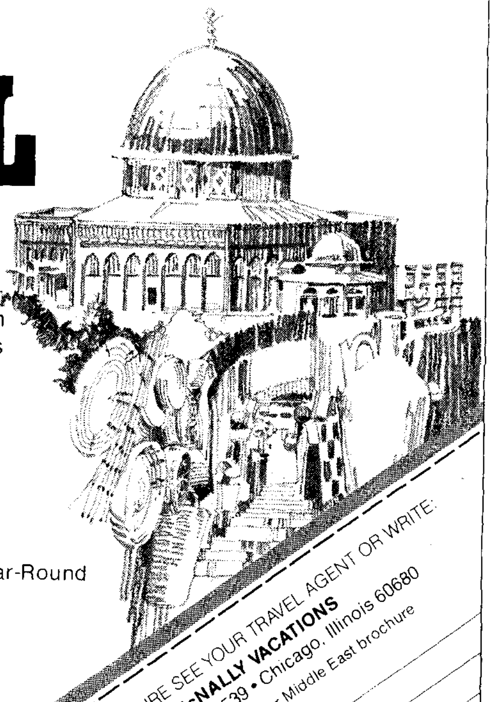

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THE RACE TRACK

It's Waya Again

REPEATING her brilliant performance of three weeks ago in the Man o' War Stakes, Daniel Wildenstein's Waya won the $200,000 Turf Classic before a crowd of 30,226 at Belmont Park last Saturday. In as exciting a race, with as dramatic a finish, as the Jockey Club Gold Cup, the previous weekend, the French-bred filly beat Tiller by a nose and Trillion, the top race mare abroad, by a neck. Four of the six starters swung into the stretch together, and three of them stormed abreast to the wire. It was almost impossible to tell who was in front, but in the last jump before the post Waya, running on the outside, with Cordero riding like mad, stuck her nose in front. At that, it took the judges a bit longer than usual to study the photo of the finish before the numbers went up. Cordero seemed too surprised to make his usual acknowledgment to the crowd for its applause. Noble Dancer II, the winner of the United Nations Handicap at Atlantic City this fall, was quickest away, and led for a few furlongs, but he finished far back. Cauthen, who rode him, said the animal didn't like the going. The time for the Turf Classic was 2:26$\frac{4}{5}$. Waya, who is by Faraway Son out of War Path, by Blue Prince, came to this country last May. This year, she has had six firsts and two seconds in eight starts. Her victories prior to the Turf Classic and the Man o' War included the Diana and Flower Bowl Handicaps, and Saturday's win brought her $130,000, which boosted her winnings to $339,943. It is a good bet that she will get the Eclipse Award for the Best Horse on Grass.

In the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase, Woodcrest's Fire Control, who was 13–1 in the betting, took the lead from Cafe Prince after the final fence, and went on to win the $36,150 race, at two miles and five furlongs, at Belmont last Friday. Cafe Prince carried a hundred and sixty-seven pounds to Fire Control's hundred and forty-six. The time for the distance was a record 4:52; six ran; Fire Control paid $29.60; and the race was worth $21,690 to the winner. A crowd of 12,252 came out for the event—the last big jumping race of the season at Belmont.

Fresh from his victory in the Turf Classic, Cordero rode Dr. Patches to a thrilling win in the $81,600 Vosburgh Handicap the following day, beating What a Summer to the wire by three-quarters of a length with a last-moment burst of speed. Sorry Lookin was third. Dr. Patches' time for the seven-furlong dash was 1:21.

THERE was plenty of Sunday action in Canada and California, too. Dr. Jerome Torsney's Mac Diarmida took the $185,300 Canadian International Championship Stakes at Toronto's Woodbine. He stepped the mile and five furlongs over the turf course in 2:41$\frac{1}{5}$. Dom Alaric finished second, a length and a half behind, and Amazer, the only filly in the race, was third.

Also on Sunday, Harbor View Farm's It's in the Air set a stakes record in the $125,950 Oak Leaf Stakes, at Santa Anita, covering the mile and a sixteenth in 1:41$\frac{1}{5}$. It's in the Air went ahead at the final turn, and raced Caline to the wire.

HORSEMEN are still talking about Affirmed's slipping his saddle in the running of the Jockey Club. Happily, nothing more serious resulted than that Louis Wolfson's Triple Crown winner finished fifth, next to last. Cauthen managed to stay on for the mile and a half over the muddy track, and there's no telling what might have happened if he hadn't. Laz Barrera, who trains Affirmed, and, of course, saddled him, has made no formal statement about the affair. Though a trainer is responsible for everything about a horse he sends to the post, one can't blame Barrera too much. Saddling thoroughbreds before a race isn't easy. They know they are going to race, and they may not feel like it, and they have tricks of their own to avoid getting saddled properly. Years ago, there was an old plater named Tippity Witchet who used to cry—at least, it sounded like that—every time he was being saddled for a race. Once the job was done, however, he would run like anything, and he won a hatful of races. No doubt there are still a few old-timers around who remember him.

—AUDAX MINOR

•

Ever wonder how many fruits or vegetables to buy for home canning?

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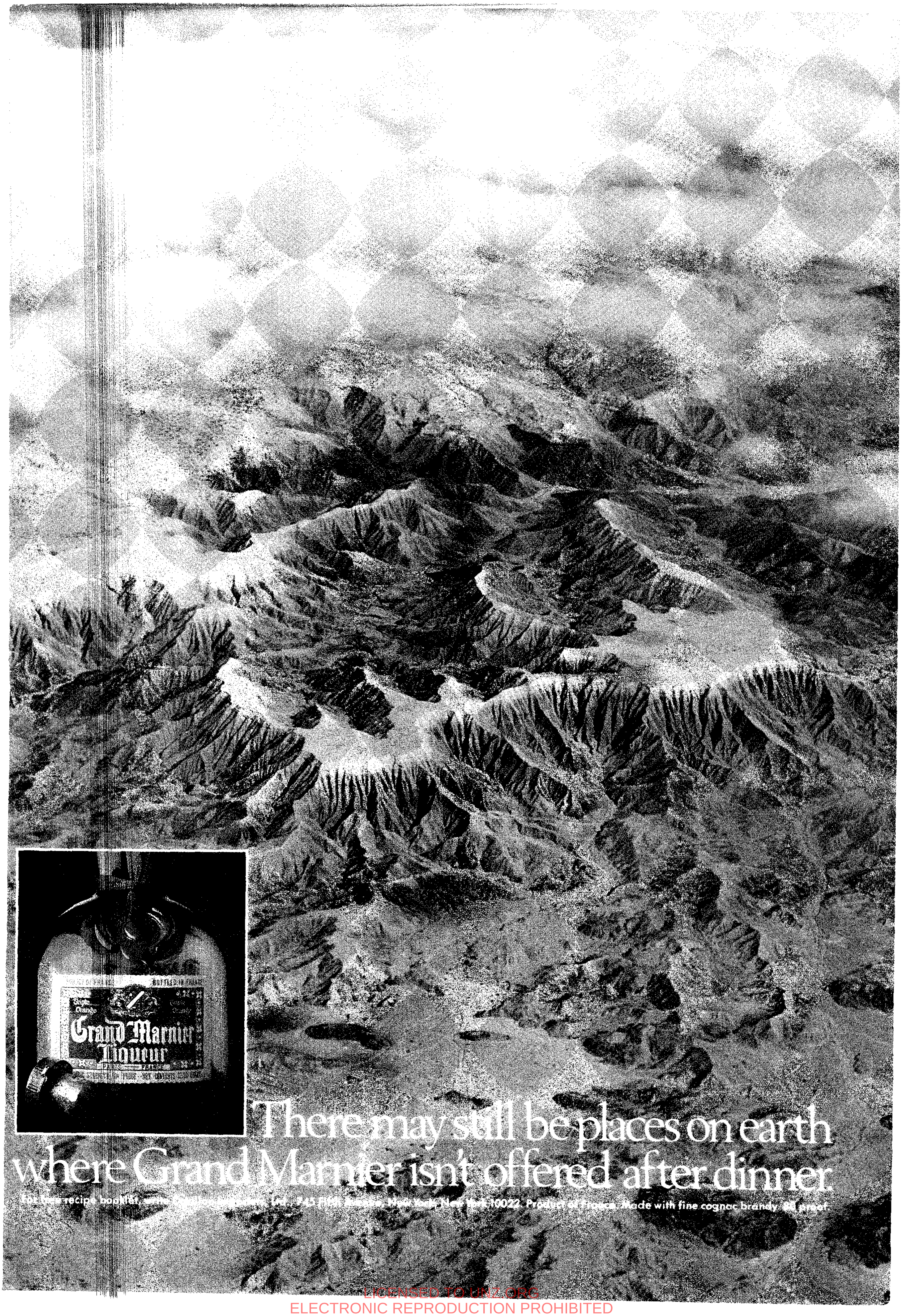
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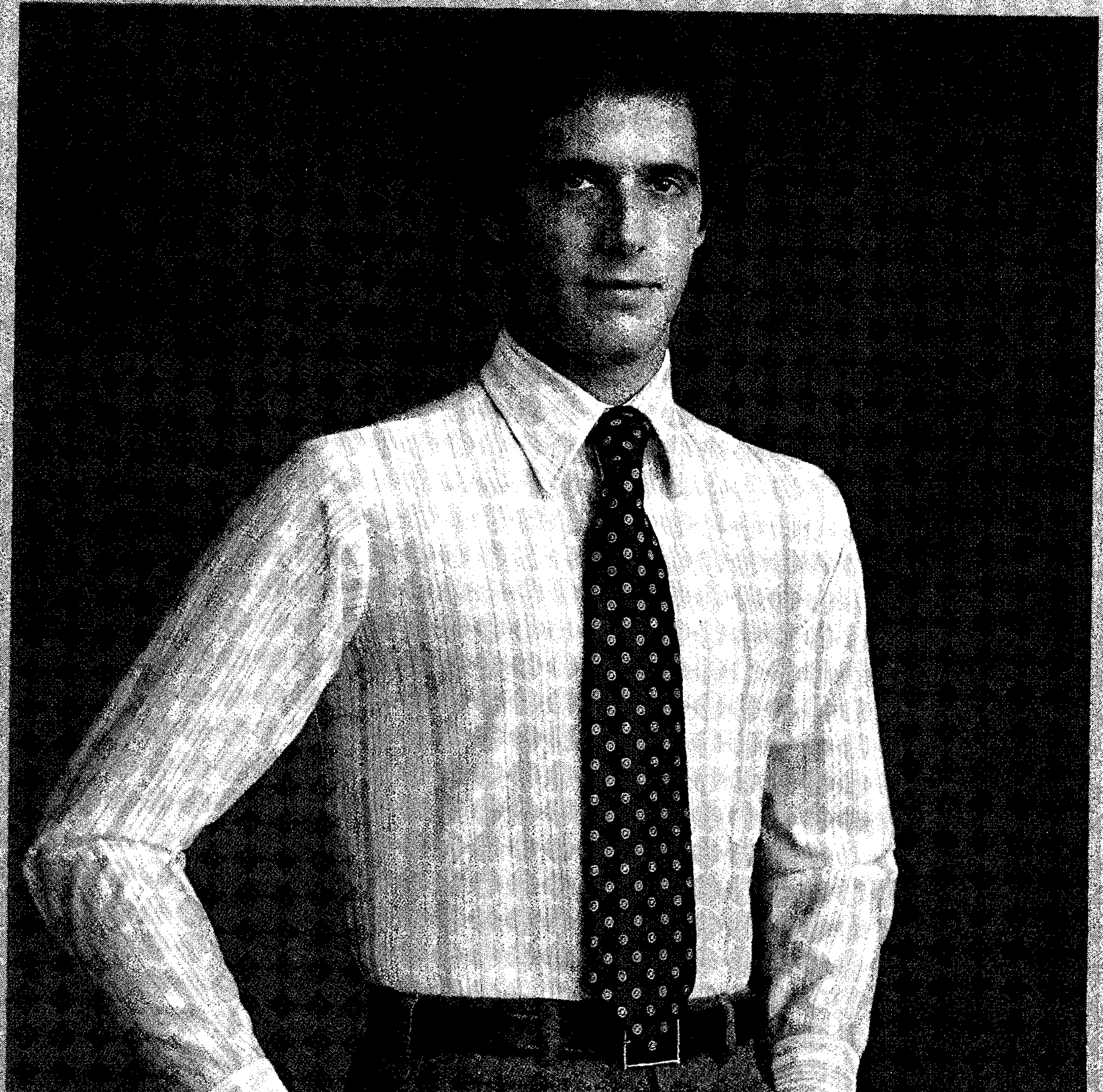
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BOOKS

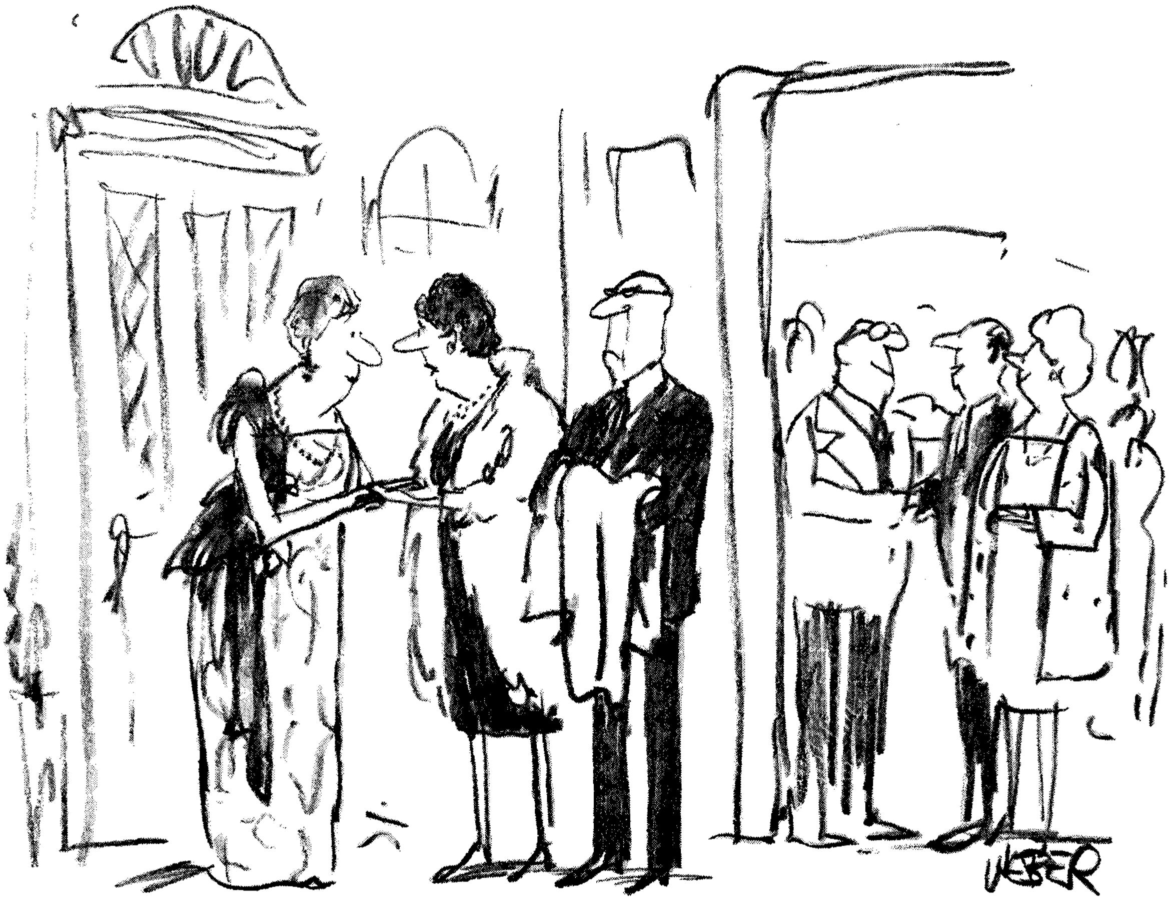
God's Acres

EVEN if we cannot believe that God is dead, it is clear that something has died. And that is the capacity of most of us for conducting our daily lives as if He were about, as if His existence and His interest in our affairs were fairly probable. This incapacity may have already had drastic consequences. It may be an honest explanation of the barbarism and confusion that attack our politics, and it may help to account for the turbulence in the private climate of the age. But there is, as well, a less portentous consequence. The widening gap that separates most of us in the antiseptic West from a normal, active religiosity not only cuts us off from grasping the life forces still primary to much of the Third World but divorces us from much that is elemental in our own past. This is so in regard to innumerable points of detail. More and more of us have only the vaguest or most academic awareness of the degree to which the seasonal pulse and segmentation of the year, the articulations of the day (from matins to compline), the punctuations of our work and hebdomadal rest and feasts both fixed and movable derive their meaning from precise religious occasions. The inhabitant of the New World, growing up out of earshot of church bells and out of sight of steeples, will be unaware that the identification of America with a second Eden—with a chance of rebirth for fallen man—which is so vital to the origins of his society, is rooted in the commonplaces of Christian theology and in the idiom of liturgical promise. In Europe, particularly in rural areas, the bells still peal the canonical hours, but increasingly they speak to the wind. Thus, much of the architecture and ground plan of European cities and towns, much of the underlying armature of European streets, squares, parish and diocesan divisions, figures of daily speech, and codes of communal reference no longer mesh with reality.

It could well be that the great turn to secularism, the decay of religiosity into urbane gesture or frank omission, had already occurred in the nineteenth century. It was the peculiar genius of the nineteenth century in the West to throw up mundane mythologies or substitute faiths. It makes increasing sense to view Marxist messianic radicalism, Darwinian positivism, and even the therapeutic allegories of Freud as surrogate religions. But much of the nineteenth century itself was still immersed in religious practices, assumptions, and habits of feeling which went back to early Christendom. If we fail to understand this, it will be not only the major part of Romantic and Victorian civilization which will elude us but also the living sources of our present.

If Volume I of the majestic Oxford University Press edition of "The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman" (Volumes XI to XXXI, which cover the years after Newman's conversion to Rome, have already appeared) is so absorbing, it is primarily because these documents exhibit in concrete detail just what it was like to come of age in a thoroughly religious culture. To oversimplify, but only somewhat: there are key points at which middle-class existence in England and on the Continent a hundred and fifty years ago was much closer to the age of Aquinas than to ours. The fissure in the inner landscape and in the structure of social behavior has opened since. And it may well be that this fissure, as far as Western Europe goes, is the foremost legacy of the 1914-18 catastrophe.

Newman was born in 1801, and baptism was to his family, as it was later to him, not a more or less eroded convention but a commitment of the essence of an individual's being to a Christian future. In the young boy's schooling, at Ealing, on the edge of London, prayers, the knowledge of Scripture, the memorization of the psalms and hymns that constituted the common tongue of the English-speaking community, regular church attendance and the audition of lengthy sermons (twice on Sunday) played a role of which few of us retain any but an antiquarian notion. Seasons of Napo-



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leonic peril signified the need for personal and national supplication to the Lord of Hosts. Indeed, to many Britons the long wars against France were the necessary struggle of a Christian people against revolutionary atheism and Satanic empire. Victories, in turn, rang from the carillons and were echoed by the Te Deum.

Minster and parish church, school chapel and meetinghouse defined the texture, the cadence of Newman's every day. There was nothing out of the ordinary about the tide of evangelical fervor and self-dedication that Newman seems to have been swept by in the late summer and fall of 1816, at a time when England was drawing deep and thankful breath after two decades of Continental struggle. Such conversions to fervid belief and eager observance were the staple of puberty and adolescence. And that Newman's first Communion, made in the chapel of his Oxford college, Trinity, on November 30, 1817, was an event of the profoundest significance to him in no manner distinguished the young undergraduate from the general run of his contemporaries. For the university itself was, in every ramification of its intellectual and administrative being, a religious, an explicitly Christian instrument.

It is Newman's life at Oxford, which began in June, 1817, that fills this first volume (it takes us to December, 1826). Impeccably edited by Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall, S.J., these letters and journals provide a minutely exact picture of daily life in the university just before the reforms that were to nudge Oxford, very slowly, toward modernity. The record is exhaustive—we can reconstruct almost every week in Newman's undergraduate career, down to the last farthing he paid for candles, sea coal, and small beer, down to every ell of cloth cut for him by his tailor. In its editorial scruple and appetite, twentieth-century academia is recomposing for us the smallest particulars of nineteenth-century life. Such enterprises, currently in progress, as the edition of Carlyle's letters or that of Gladstone's diaries (one-half again as long as the Bible) will leave us more intimately familiar with English daily life from the eighteen-twenties to the end of the century than we are with many aspects of our own times and surroundings. This familiarity derives also from the fact that Newman and his kind set down their experiences in voluminous and immediate writing, whereas our sole witness tends to be the ephemeral verisimilitude of the tape or the photograph. And yet even as we master the material details of Newman's period its spirit grows remote.

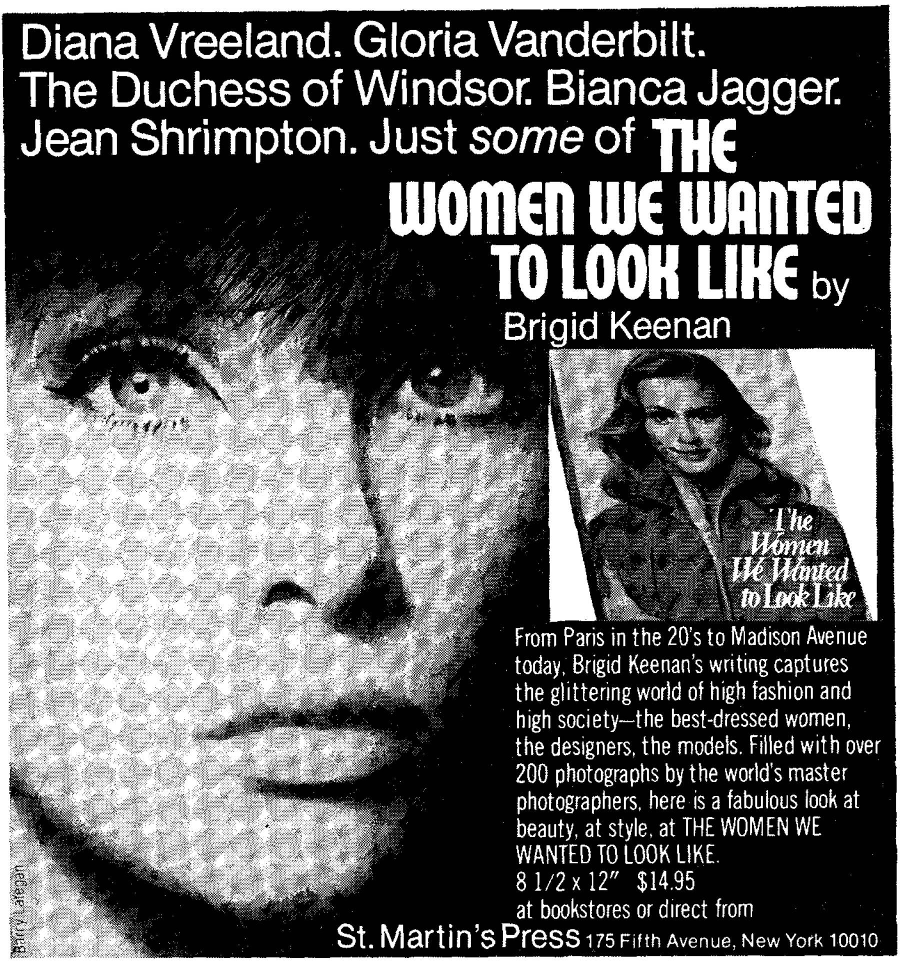
Newman's work load leaves one numb. Not even the shock troops in the first year of today's medical and law schools can match Newman's ordeal—and he was all of seventeen and eighteen at the time. "During 20 out of the 24 weeks immediately preceding my examination, I fagged at an average of more than twelve hours a day. If one day I read only nine, the next I read fifteen." At seventeen, Newman was examined in Latin translation, the writing of a theme in Latin, a chorus from Euripides, an English composition, "then some Plato, then some Lucretius, then some Xenophon, then some Livy." But it was not only the substance of ancient philosophy and letters which the undergraduate strove to master; it was mathematics and physics as well. An average day—twelve hours of concentrated study—would see him moving from Aristotle's "Ethics" to thirty-two pages of Thucydides and then to Euclid, to Robertson on conic sections, and to Newton's "Principia" (just before the chapel bell rang). Fearfully overworked, Newman did dismally on his university examinations in the winter of 1820. The scholarship that Trinity had previously awarded to him allowed him to hang on at Oxford. Less than two years later, he was a candidate for the most arduous, prestigious of Oxford hurdles: the exams for a fellowship to Oriel College, high house of Anglican intellect. This time, he performed memorably. He was in his rooms practicing the fiddle when, just before noon on April 12, 1822, the butler of the Provost of Oriel entered. "He had, he feared, disagreeable news to announce, viz. that Mr. Newman was elected Fellow of Oriel, and that his immediate presence was required there." April 12th would remain to Newman, even in old age, an anniversary of grace.

But both the mountainous curriculum he had pursued as a student and his elevation to senior status in the university were only steps toward the religious life. A fellowship in an Oxford or Cambridge college meant (though not in all instances) the taking of holy orders. After marriage, a fellow would leave his collegiate cloister, where, of course, only bachelors could reside, and become curate or vicar in one of the parishes of which his college had the patronage. (Vestiges of this system of college livings continue to this day.) Even if he remained unmarried, a fellow's tutorial functions inside his college would have a strongly ecclesiastical flavor. To join the company of one's fellows, as Newman did on that April morning, "crossing from St. Mary's to the lane opposite at so extraordinary a pace," was to take one's seat in the college chapel (with the illustrious Keble beside one).

Ordained deacon in June, 1824, Newman soon took up duties at St. Clement's, a working-class parish in Oxford. His activities were again prodigious: curate of two thousand souls, tireless fund-raiser for the church, junior treasurer at Oriel, dean, tutor, and bursar at St. Alban Hall (a student hostel that was run along almost monastic lines, as were the colleges themselves), and budding author of compendious articles on Apollonius and on miracles. "My hand," confesses Newman to his mother in November, 1826, "is so tired with writing . . ." In fact, his general health was affected by manifold pressures. But only one thought mattered, a thought shared with many young men of his generation and training: "I trust I am placed where I may be an instrument for good to the Church of God." Such a self-ordination, moreover, manifestly included many who had chosen or were to choose a mode of life in the laity.

One is naturally tempted to comb this volume of juvenilia for spoor of the later drama: to try and find, even between the lines, hints of the great inner storms that were to lead John Henry Newman to publish "Tract XC" in 1841—the famous contention that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican creed are compatible with the apostolic continuity and authority of the Roman Catholic Church—and were to be climaxed by his conversion to Roman Catholicism in October, 1845. What indications are there in these early years of the crises of spirit which were to launch the Oxford Movement, with Oriel as its font, and profoundly affect the history of Victorian Britain?

One would have to be both a learned theologian and a rare psychologist to find any real portents. At nineteen, the young Newman cannot accept the solacing belief that regeneration attends automatically on baptism: "It is *absolutely necessary* for *every* one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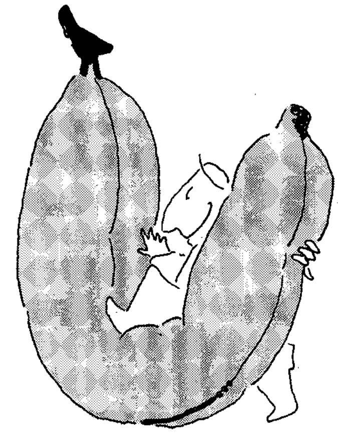

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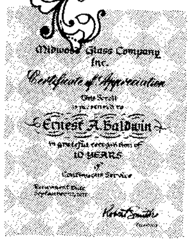
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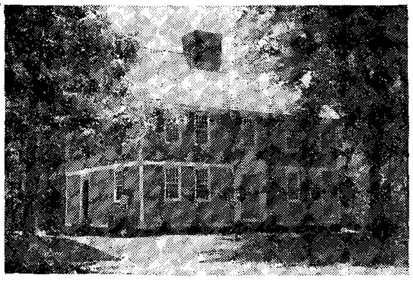

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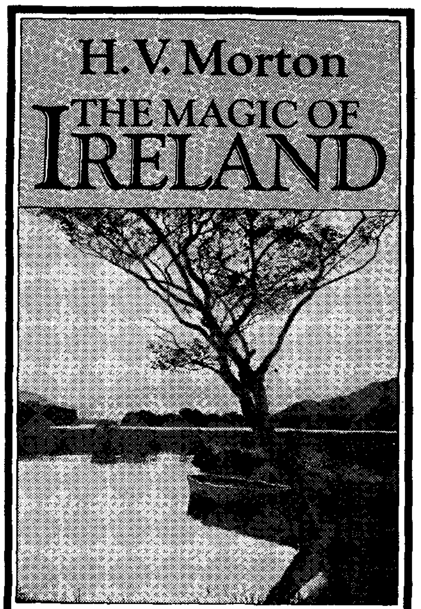

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to undergo a *total change* in his heart and affections, *before* he can enter into the kingdom of heaven." Not long after, he is reproved by his father for carrying religion "too far," for introducing into legitimate piety "a nervousness and morbid sensibility" (an ominous phrase in the light of later polemics). By February, 1825, current evangelical doctrines no longer satisfy Newman; he can find no scriptural authority for Protestant views on individual predestination. In a series of voluminous letters to his reprobate brother Charles Robert, Newman urges the tenets of his own faith. This seems to set in motion a process of close introspection and theological scrutiny. In the spring of 1826, Newman is planning a systematic reading of the Church Fathers. In retrospect, this decision takes on weight: patristic studies were not the forte of the Anglican Establishment, which may have sensed that they could induce the mind either toward unwelcome historical criticism or toward popery. But in the actual context none of Newman's motions of spirit were dramatic. Generations of young educated believers in nineteenth-century Europe and North America travelled a similar path. The doctrinal queries raised and argued by the young Newman were at the core of his society and of the psychology of personal life. His concern, his methodical investigation of the sources and issues were doubtless more acute than those of laymen, but only in degree. They would, by themselves, give no warrant of future scandal. (By contrast, there is even in the very early Kierkegaard, Newman's contemporary, an apocalyptic apartness.)

If the subsequent drama does have any antecedents in Newman's early persona, these antecedents are stylistic—they are elements of tone. Newman's prose, first modelled on Pope's verse and Gibbon's history, acquires a sinuous musicality, a darting pleasure in nuances of logic and sensibility which foreshadow the great casuist and persuader. From the beginning, moreover, Newman's appetite for ancientness, his content in the ceremonies of hierarchy as Oxford displays them are marked. Ancientness carries for him not only legitimacy but a vivid glow. And there are in Newman's phrasings of the Anglican position a worrying overnicety, a striving for dogmatic clarity which, inevitably, harbor the germ of future challenge. Hindsight hints that there was something fated about the fact that one of Newman's contributions to the Encyclopaedia Metropolitana should have been on the "Argument on Miracles." It is not a subject with which reformed Christianity has ever been much at ease.

Returning to Oxford in a coach in October, 1818, Newman listened to a fellow-traveller just back from an Italian grand tour:

> To the lovers of music, he said, there cannot be a greater treat than the "Miserere"—the Basilica Vaticana is filled with people in mourning at the close of day—the sun descends, and the last taper is extinguished—there is a dead silence—the moon is observed rising and gleams thro' the window—the solemn chant commences in a low and melancholy voice. "With that," said he, "I was affected, although I have no ear at all." He had also seen the Pope, who is a venerable old gentleman.

This is the first of Newman's references to the Holy See. More were to follow. —GEORGE STEINER

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

LIVING IN THE 25TH HOUR, by Richard Jones (Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $9.95). The narrator of this disturbing novel is a genial English lawyer and part-time novelist. A married woman in the South London district where he lives has declared it her moral, and his legal, business to save the young winner of a local beauty contest—"Miss S.W. 84"—from corruption by two middle-aged brothers, one of whom has humiliated the married woman sexually. The other brother, who has gained fame in show business and plans to do the same in pornographic films, has offered the girl a helping hand to stardom. The lawyer, humoring the plaintiff, agrees to keep his eye on the objects of her suspicions. There are no legal grounds for intervention, however, and he is a passive observer at the grisly climax, when the young starlet falls as swiftly as she rose. Mr. Jones' attention to the working-class origins of pop sadism and his fascination with British dialects may recall Anthony Burgess's "A Clockwork Orange," but the "25th hour" of the title, the lawyer explains, refers to the early nineteen-seventies—"the dying fall of the so-called Age of Pleasure." One wishes this story had been conjured up instead from an imagined and improbable future.

NOTE: "Short Stories: Five Decades," a collection by Irwin Shaw, has been published by Delacorte Press ($14.95). A large part of the con-

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GENERAL

THE DRED SCOTT CASE: ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN AMERICAN LAW AND POLITICS, by Don E. Fehrenbacher (Oxford; $25). A lot of solid work has gone into this book, which sets several records straight, from the legal status of slavery in common law, to the personality of Dred Scott, to the complicated arguments about who really owned him at the time of his suit. Scott sued for his freedom from slavery on the ground that his owner had taken him to live in a state where slavery was forbidden. The case was decided by the Supreme Court in 1857, when Chief Justice Roger Taney declined to rule on narrow legal grounds (such as whether Scott's owner had really moved or was merely visiting), and, instead, pronounced that blacks in America were uniquely destined to subordinate status and could never become citizens. Taney's decision was overturned practically by the Civil War and invalidated legally by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, but, Mr. Fehrenbacher says, his reputation has been rehabilitated by several generations of revisionist historians—Confederate apologists, neo-Jacksonians, and, mostly lately, judicial supremacists, for Taney was the most activist Chief Justice between Marshall and Warren.

SEVEN DAYS A WEEK: WOMEN AND DOMESTIC SERVICE IN INDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA, by David M. Katzman (Oxford; $14.95). In 1870, according to the author, half of all gainfully employed women worked in domestic service; by 1920 that figure had declined to sixteen per cent. His plausible, thoughtful, and readable study tells us why. Many factors enter into the story; the main one is that women hated being servants. Mr. Katzman, who has gathered first-person anecdotes and impressions and has assembled a good statistical framework in which to embed his tales, finds that while every potential maid was aware of the financial advantages—free food, clothing, and shelter—of domestic service, the emotional disadvantage of the "struggle" for control between mistress and maid gave less profitable but more impersonal jobs, such as factory work, greater attraction. It may be surprising to think of dark, satanic mills as hap-

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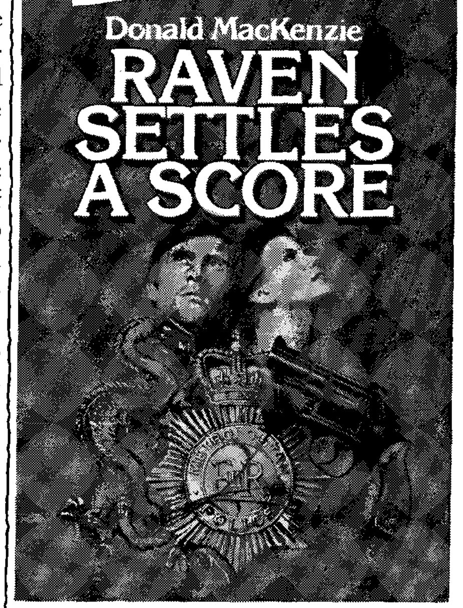

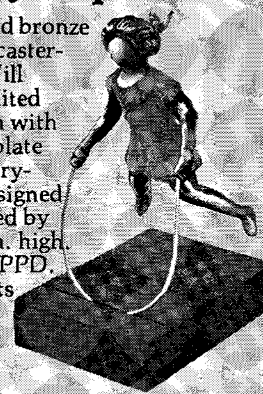

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pier workplaces than stately homes, but Mr. Katzman's book is valuable just because it is full of such surprises.

DOROTHEA LANGE: A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LIFE, by Milton Meltzer (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $15). This biography, one of the longest and most detailed on any photographer, is an industrious and respectable job, but it isn't the kind of book that will draw many new admirers to Lange's work. Quoting extensively from letters, recorded interviews, and notes that Lange made to herself about what she was doing, and from what others have written and said about her, the author gives us a rounded portrait, but his prose has the bland and overly explicit quality of textbook writing. The section on Lange's work as a documentary photographer during the Depression, when she made her most memorable pictures, is especially dry and schoolteacherish. For stretches, we feel as if we could be reading about any photographer of that era. Yet the book's last hundred-odd pages—covering the period from the early nineteen-forties until Lange's death, in 1965—are absorbing. In these years, though she continued to make strong individual photographs, Lange was never as fully and spontaneously in touch with her material as she had been in the thirties. She travelled widely with her second husband, the social scientist Paul Schuster Taylor, often in the hope of finding new material, but she was frequently ill, or unable to rouse herself to work. Much of her energy went into looking after—sometimes interfering with—her large family. Mr. Meltzer is sympathetic without being sentimental, and he gives us a real sense of someone living through the difficult, drawn-out end of a career. Illustrated with a selection of Lange's photographs and with photographs of her and her family.

NOTE: "The River World and Other Explorations," a collection of Berton Roueché's articles for this magazine (on garlic; on Hermann, Missouri; on King Island, in the Bering Sea; on a dozen other subjects), has been published by Harper & Row; $8.95.

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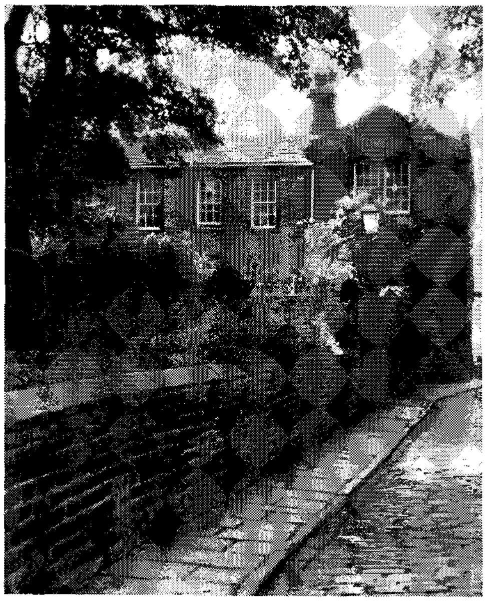

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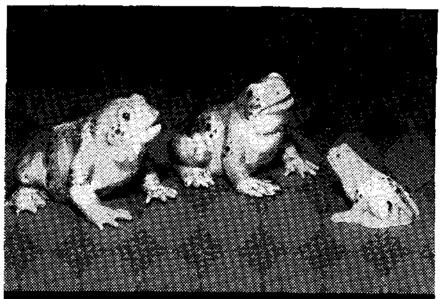

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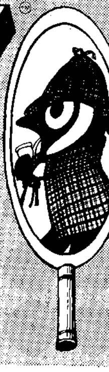

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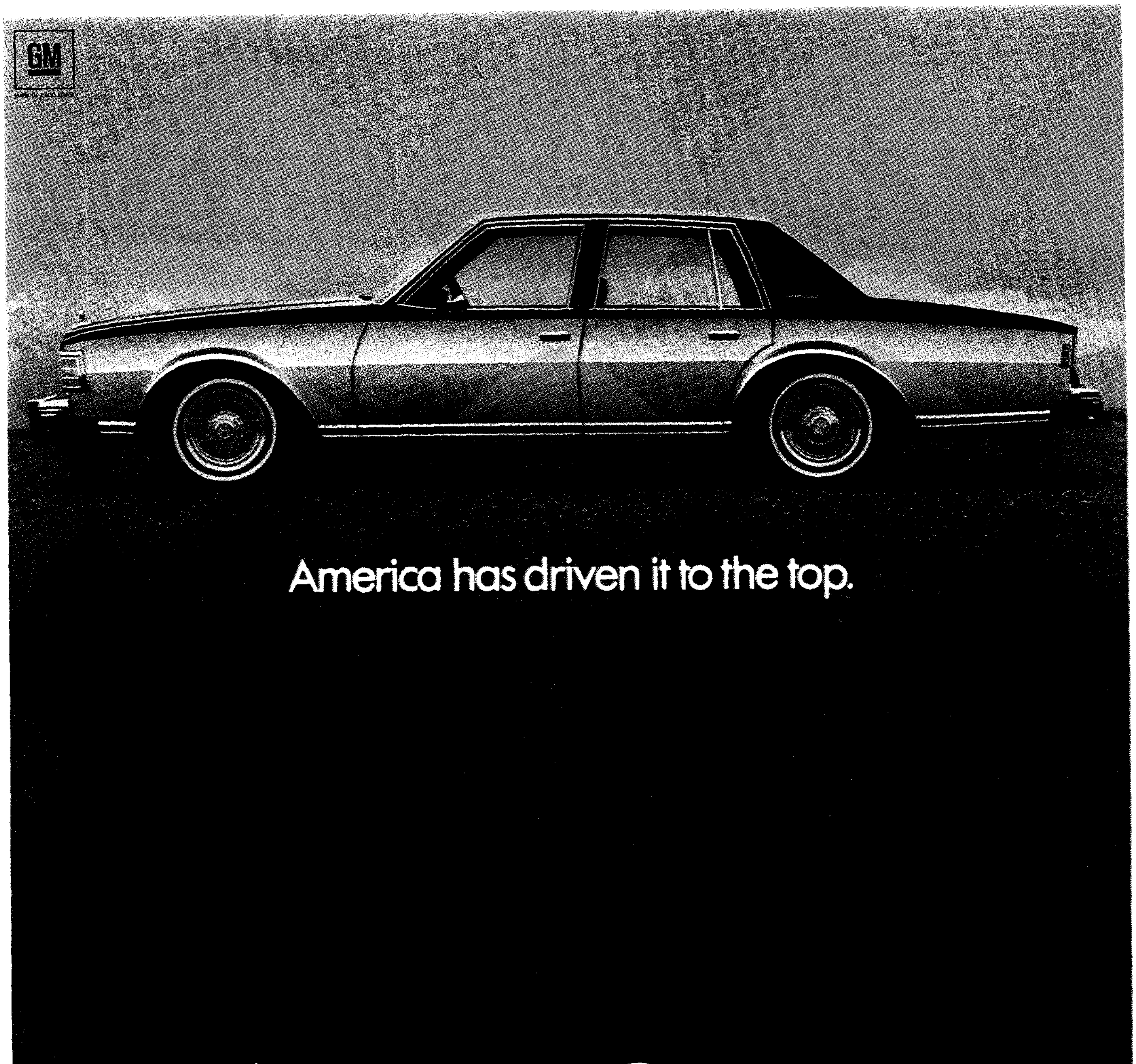

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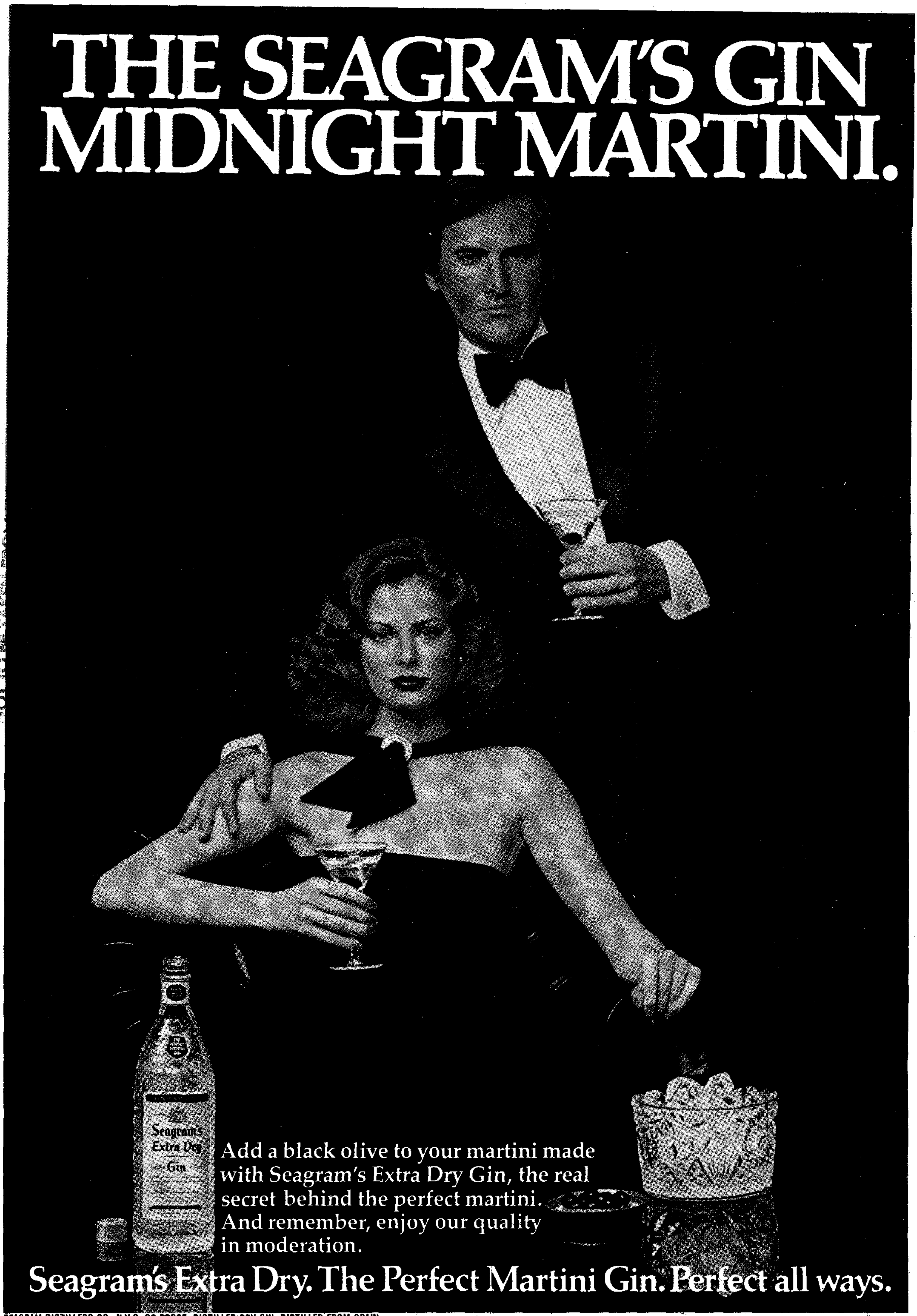

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